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**THE
WRITINGS OF MANKIND**



From Painting by A. W. Bayes

DEPARTURE OF THE "MAYFLOWER"

The Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority

Authorized Text

THE WRITINGS OF MANKIND

*Selections from the Writings of All Ages, with Extensive
Historical Notes, Comment and Criticism, Giving the
Customs, Habits, Characters; the Arts, Philoso-
phies and Religions, of Those Nations
That Have Contributed Most
to Civilization*

By

CHARLES H. SYLVESTER

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"JOURNEYS THROUGH BOOKLAND", ETC.

TWENTY VOLUMES

Illustrated

VOLUME TWENTY

ENGLAND - AMERICA - INDEX



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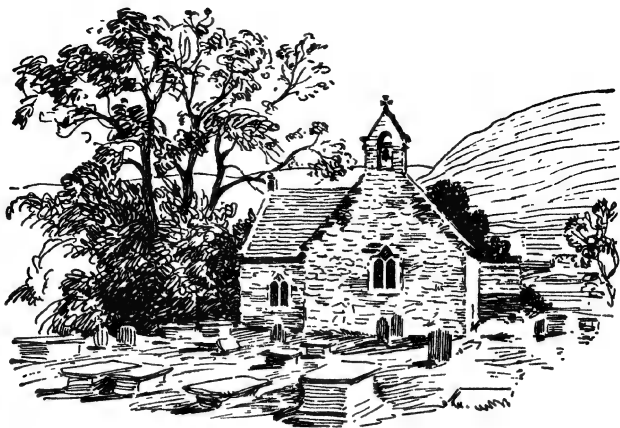
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CHAPTER XXIX

• THE VICTORIAN AGE (CONTINUED)

FICTION (CONCLUDED)

GEORGE ELIOT. Mary Ann Evans, or, as she later wrote her name, Marian Evans, is known to the world much better by her pen name, George Eliot (1819–1880). She was the daughter of a provincial Methodist, who lived in Warwickshire in the parish of Griff, where all her childhood and youth were spent and from which locality she drew many of the characters of her novels. Until twenty-two years of age she lived with her parents, and during the last six years of the time had entire charge of the farm and dairy, for her mother had died and her elder sister had married. Solitary by nature, she read voraciously, particularly in history and theology,

and in this manner cured many of the defects of her early education. When her father's death broke up the home in which they had lived after leaving the farm, she was thirty years old, and after traveling on the continent she went to London as assistant editor of the *Westminster Review*. Here she had every opportunity to make friends and soon became acquainted with most of the prominent literary characters of the time. Among those whom she met was George Henry Lewes, a brilliant man who exerted a powerful influence over her life and work. Although Lewes had an undivorced wife still living, George Eliot braved the criticisms of her friends and lived with him till his death. In spite of this strange alliance it is certain that the encouragement and sympathetic assistance of Lewes was a considerable factor in her success, if not the original cause of her entering the field as a novelist. He was tenderly considerate of her and saved her the annoyance of business relations with the publishers and the knowledge of many of the unfavorable criticisms passed upon her. She was never a very strong or self-reliant person, and after the death of Mr. Lewes she married Mr. Cross, a man much her junior.

She was a woman of plain appearance, lacking many of the graces that make her sex attractive, but from her precocious childhood she was marked by a superior intellect and great power to work. She studied zealously, even when burdened by the cares of her house-

hold, and prepared herself well for the arduous literary labors of later years. But contradictory as it may seem, she was never strong physically, and for some years before her death was very frail and delicate.

Beginning life with a deep and ardent nature, she early fell under the religious influences that promised to make her a devout believer. But much thinking and personal study put her in such a state of mind that when she came to live among free-thinkers she zealously adopted their skepticism. Through years of various forms of unbelief she finally rejected the supernatural and based her religious beliefs upon a generous toleration and the principles of brotherly love and service. Mr. Frederick Meyers, in a passage quoted by Painter, gives an account of her mature beliefs:

I remember how at Cambridge I walked with her once in the Fellows' garden of Trinity on an evening of rainy May; and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have so often been used as the inspiring trumpet call of men—the words God, Immortality, Duty—pronounced with terrible earnestness how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable was the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened, and night fell, her grave majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp, one by one, the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third only, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid that columnar circuit of the forest trees, beneath the last twilight of starless

skies, I seemed to be gazing like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls—on a sanctuary with no Presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God.

She was thirty-seven years old when she published her first story, *Amos Barton*, which about a year later was followed by several short novels which she had collected as *Scenes of Clerical Life*. Although she concealed her authorship cleverly, these writings gained her some favorable notice and a measure of popularity, but it was only after the appearance of her first ambitious novel, *Adam Bede*, that she was regarded as one of the principal writers of the day. By this time her more intimate friends had identified her, but they joined in preserving the secret of her authorship.

She is superior to both Thackeray and Dickens in her minute analysis and keen delineation of character, and is equally potent in the intensity of her plots. Although not so full of wit and funny conceits as the two men, she is by no means devoid of humor, and excels them both in the power of her phrases. Moreover, she is wholly unsurpassed in her ability to develop human character under the reader's eyes. Critics vary in their estimate of her writings, but are quite united in feeling that her attempts at poetry and the drama are much inferior to her work in fiction. She was too much of a thinker to make a perfect novelist, and as she grew older she lost the fineness of her touch, her writings became more laborious, and her last novel was ponderous to a degree.



Photo: Ewing Galloway. From Painting

GEORGE ELIOT

1819-1880

If the reader confines himself to *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner* and *Romola*, he will agree that according to modern standards in fiction George Eliot stands at the head of Victorian novelists.

II. “ADAM BEDE.” *Adam Bede* is a bright, wholesome story of English life, in spite of its one painful feature. In it she was dealing with the surroundings of her early life, and for the originals of such immortal characters as Adam Bede, Mrs. Poyser and Dinah she was deeply indebted to her father, mother and aunt, deeply indebted for the traits that make them admired. The opening scene is the workshop of a village carpenter, and it is a fine bit of descriptive writing:

The afternoon sun was warm on the five workmen there, busy upon doors and window-frames and wainscoting. A scent of pine-wood from a tent-like pile of planks outside the open door mingled itself with the scent of the elder-bushes, which were spreading their summer snow close to the open window opposite; the slanting sunbeams shone through the transparent shavings that flew before the steady plane, and lit up the fine grain of the oak paneling which stood propped against the wall. On a heap of those soft shavings a rough gray shepherd-dog had made himself a pleasant bed, and was lying with his nose between his fore-paws, occasionally wrinkling his brows to cast a glance at the tallest of the five workmen, who was carving a shield in the center of a wooden mantel-piece. It was to this workman that the strong barytone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer, singing:

“Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth——”

Here some measurement was to be taken which required more concentrated attention, and the sonorous voice subsided into a low whistle; but it presently broke out again with renewed vigor:

“Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noonday clear.”

Such a voice could only come from a broad chest, and the broad chest belonged to a large-boned muscular man, nearly six feet high, with a back so flat and a head so well poised, that when he drew himself up to take a more distant survey of his work, he had the air of a soldier standing at ease. The sleeve rolled up above the elbow showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long supple hand, with its bony finger-tips, looked ready for works of skill. In his tall stalwartness, Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his name; but the jet-black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper-cap, and the keen glance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly-marked, prominent, and mobile eyebrows, indicated a mixture of Celtic blood.

Dinah Morris is the real heroine of the tale, but Adam Bede's love is fixed on Hetty Sorrell, who is thus beautifully described as she stands in the dairy of the Hall farm:

It is of little use for me to tell you that Hetty's cheek was like a rose-petal, that dimples played about her pouting lips, that her large dark eyes had a soft roguishness under their long lashes, and that her curly hair, though all pushed back under her round cap while she was at work, stole back in dark delicate rings on her forehead and about her white shell-like ears; it is of little use for me to say how lovely was the contour of her pink and white neckerchief, tucked into her low plum-colored stuff bodice; or how the linen butter-making apron, with its bib, seemed a thing to be imitated in

silk by duchesses, since it fell in such charming lines; or how her brown stockings and thick-soled buckled shoes, lost all that clumsiness which they must certainly have had when empty of her foot and ankle; of little use, unless you have seen a woman who affected you as Hetty affected her beholders, for otherwise, though you might conjure up the image of a lovely woman, she would not in the least resemble that distracted kitten-like maiden. Hetty's was a spring-tide beauty; it was the beauty of young frisking things, round-limbed, gamboling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence—the innocence of a young star-browed calf, for example, that, being inclined for a promenade out of bounds, leads you a severe steeplechase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog.

The following extract will give us a better acquaintance with Adam and Hetty:

Adam walked by the rick-yard, at present empty of ricks, to the little wooden gate leading into the garden—once the well-tended kitchen-garden of a manor-house; now, but for the handsome brick wall with stone coping that ran along one side of it, a true farm-house garden, with hardy perennial flowers, unpruned fruit-trees, and kitchen vegetables growing together in careless, half-neglected abundance. In that leafy, flowery, bushy time, to look for any one in this garden was like playing at “hide-and-seek.” There were the tall hollyhocks beginning to flower, and dazzle the eye with their pink, white, and yellow; there were the syringas and Gueldres roses, all large and disorderly for want of trimming; there were leafy walls of scarlet beans and late peas; there was a row of bushy filberts in one direction, and in another a huge apple-tree making a barren circle under its low-spreading boughs. But what signified a barren patch or two? The garden was so large. There was always a superfluity of broad beans—it took nine or ten of Adam's strides to get to the end of the uncut grass walk that ran by the side of them; and as for other vegetables, there

was so much more room than was necessary for them, that in the rotation of crops a large flowering bed of groundsel was of yearly occurrence on one spot or other. The very rose-trees, at which Adam stopped to pluck one, looked as if they grew wild; they were all huddled together in bushy masses, now flaunting with wide open petals, almost all of them of the streaked pink-and-white kind, which doubtless dated from the union of the houses of York and Lancaster. Adam was wise enough to choose a compact Provence rose that peeped out half-smothered by its flaunting scentless neighbors, and held it in his hand—he thought he should be more at ease holding something in his hand—as he walked on to the far end of the garden, where he remembered there was the largest row of currant-trees, not far off from the great yew-tree arbor.

But he had not gone many steps beyond the roses, when he heard the shaking of a bough, and a boy's voice saying:

“Now, then, Totty, hold out your pinny—there's a duck.”

The voice came from the boughs of a tall cherry-tree, where Adam had no difficulty in discerning a small blue-pinafored figure perched in a commodious position where the fruit was thickest. Doubtless Totty was below, behind the screen of peas. Yes—with her bonnet hanging down her back, and her fat face, dreadfully smeared with red juice, turned up towards the cherry-tree, while she held her little round hole of a mouth and her red-stained pinafore to receive the promised downfall. I am sorry to say, more than half the cherries that fell were hard and yellow instead of juicy and red; but Totty spent no time in useless regrets, and she was already sucking the third juiciest when Adam said, “There now, Totty, you've got your cherries. Run into the house with 'em to mother—she wants you—she's in the dairy. Run in this minute—there's a good little girl.”

He lifted her up in his strong arms and kissed her as he spoke, a ceremony which Totty regarded as a tiresome

interruption to cherry-eating; and when he set her down she trotted off quite silently towards the house, sucking her cherries as she went along.

“Tommy, my lad, take care you’re not shot for a little thieving bird,” said Adam, as he walked on towards the currant-trees.

He could see there was a large basket at the end of the row: Hetty would not be far off, and Adam already felt as if she were looking at him. Yet when he turned the corner she was standing with her back towards him, and stooping to gather the low-hanging fruit. Strange that she had not heard him coming! perhaps it was because she was making the leaves rustle. She started when she became conscious that some one was near—started so violently that she dropped the basin with the currants in it, and then, when she saw it was Adam, she turned from pale to deep red. That blush made his heart beat with a new happiness. Hetty had never blushed at seeing him before.

“I frightened you,” he said, with a delicious sense that it didn’t signify what he said, since Hetty seemed to feel as much as he did; “let *me* pick the currants up.”

That was soon done, for they had only fallen in a tangled mass on the grass-plot, and Adam, as he rose and gave her the basin again, looked straight into her eyes with the subdued tenderness that belongs to the first moments of hopeful love.

Hetty did not turn away her eyes; her blush had subsided, and she met his glance with a quiet sadness, which contented Adam, because it was so unlike anything he had seen in her before.

“There’s not many more currants to get,” she said; “I shall soon ha’ done now.”

“I’ll help you,” said Adam; and he fetched the large basket which was nearly full of currants, and set it close to them.

Not a word more was spoken as they gathered the currants. Adam’s heart was too full to speak, and he thought Hetty knew all that was in it. She was not indifferent to

his presence after all ; she had blushed when she saw him, and then there was that touch of sadness about her which must surely mean love, since it was the opposite of her usual manner, which had often impressed him as indifference. And he could glance at her continually as she bent over the fruit, while the level evening sunbeams stole through the thick apple-tree boughs, and rested on her round cheek and neck as if they too were in love with her. It was to Adam the time that a man can least forget in after-life,—the time when he believes that the first woman he has ever loved betrays by a slight something—a word, a tone, a glance, the quivering of an eye or an eyelid—that she is at least beginning to love him in return. The sign is so slight, it is scarcely perceptible to the ear or eye—he could describe it to no one—it is a mere feather-touch, yet it seems to have changed his whole being, to have merged an uneasy yearning into a delicious unconsciousness of everything but the present moment. So much of our early gladness vanishes utterly from our memory : we can never recall the joy with which we laid our heads on our mother's bosom or rode on our father's back in childhood ; doubtless that joy is wrought up into our nature, as the sunlight of long-past mornings is wrought up in the soft mellowness of the apricot ; but it is gone forever from our imagination, and we can only *believe* in the joy of childhood. But the first glad moment in our first love is a vision which returns to us to the last, and brings with it a thrill of feeling intense and special as the recurrent sensation of a sweet odor breathed in a far-off hour of happiness. It is a memory that gives a more exquisite touch to tenderness, that feels the madness of jealousy, and adds the last keenness to the agony of despair.

Hetty bending over the red bunches, the level rays piercing the screen of apple-tree boughs, the length of bushy garden beyond, his own emotion as he looked at her and believed that she was thinking of him, and that there was no need for them to talk—Adam remembered it all to the last moment of his life.

And Hetty? You know quite well that Adam was mistaken about her. Like many other men, he thought the signs of love for another were signs of love towards himself. When Adam was approaching unseen by her, she was absorbed as usual in thinking and wondering about Arthur's possible return: the sound of any man's footstep would have affected her just in the same way—she would have *felt it might be Arthur* before she had time to see, and the blood that forsook her cheek in the agitation of that momentary feeling would have rushed back again at the sight of any one else just as much as at the sight of Adam. He was not wrong in thinking that a change had come over Hetty: the anxieties and fears of a first passion, with which she was trembling, had become stronger than vanity, had given her for the first time that sense of helpless dependence on another's feeling which awakens the clinging deprecating womanhood even in the shallowest girl that can ever experience it, and creates in her a sensibility to kindness which found her quite hard before. For the first time Hetty felt that there was something soothing to her in Adam's timid yet manly tenderness: she wanted to be treated lovingly—oh, it was very hard to bear this blank of absence, silence, apparent indifference, after those moments of glowing love! She was not afraid that Adam would tease her with love-making and flattering speeches like her other admirers: he had always been so reserved to her: she could enjoy without any fear the sense that this strong brave man loved her, and was near her. It never entered into her mind that Adam was pitiable too—that Adam, too, must suffer one day.

Hetty, we know, was not the first woman that had behaved more gently to the man who loved her in vain, because she had herself begun to love another. It was a very old story; but Adam knew nothing about it, so he drank in the sweet delusion.

“That'll do,” said Hetty, after a little while. “Aunt wants me to leave some on the trees. I'll take 'em in

"It's very well I came to carry the basket," said Adam, "for it 'ud ha' been too heavy for your little arms."

"No; I could ha' carried it with both hands."

"Oh, I daresay," said Adam, smiling, "and been as long getting into the house as a little ant carrying a caterpillar. Have you ever seen those tiny fellows carrying things four times as big as themselves?"

"No," said Hetty, indifferently, not caring to know the difficulties of ant-life.

"Oh, I used to watch 'em often when I was a lad. But now, you see, I can carry the basket with one arm, as if it was an empty nutshell, and give you th' other arm to lean on. Won't you? Such big arms as mine were made for little arms like yours to lean on."

Hetty smiled faintly, and put her arm within his. Adam looked down at her, but her eyes were turned dreamily towards another corner of the garden.

"Have you ever been to Eagledale?" she said, as they walked slowly along.

"Yes," said Adam, pleased to have her ask a question about himself; "ten years ago, when I was a lad, I went with father to see about some work there. It's a wonderful sight—rocks and caves such as you never saw in your life. I never had a right notion o' rocks till I went there."

"How long did it take to get there?"

"Why, it took us the best part o' two days' walking. But it's nothing of a day's journey for anybody as has got a first-rate nag. The Captain 'ud get there in nine or ten hours, I'll be bound, he's such a rider. And I shouldn't wonder if he's back again to-morrow; he's too active to rest long in that lonely place, all by himself, for there's nothing but a bit of an inn i' that part where he's gone to fish. I wish he'd got th' estate in his hands; that 'ud be the right thing for him, for it 'ud give him plenty to do, and he'd do't well too, for all he's so young; he's got better notions o' things than many a man twice his age. He spoke very handsome to me th' other day

about lending me money to set up i' business; and if things came round that way, I'd rather be beholding to him than to any other man i' the world."

Poor Adam was led on to speak about Arthur because he thought Hetty would be pleased to know that the young squire was so ready to befriend him; the fact entered into his future prospects, which he would like to seem promising in her eyes. And it was true that Hetty listened with an interest which brought a new light into her eyes and a half smile upon her lips.

"How pretty the roses are now!" Adam continued, pausing to look at them. "See! I stole the prettiest, but I didna mean to keep it myself. I think these as are all pink, and have got a finer sort o' green leaves, are prettier than the striped uns, don't you?"

He set down the basket, and took the rose from his button-hole.

"It smells very sweet," he said; "those striped uns have no smell. Stick it in your frock, and then you can put it in water after. It 'ud be a pity to let it fade."

Hetty took the rose, smiling as she did so at the pleasant thought that Arthur could so soon get back if he liked. There was a flash of hope and happiness in her mind, and with a sudden impulse of gayety she did what she had very often done before—stuck the rose in her hair a little above the left ear. Then tender admiration in Adam's face was slightly shadowed by reluctant disapproval. Hetty's love of finery was just the thing that would most provoke his mother, and he himself disliked it as much as it was possible for him to dislike anything that belonged to her.

"Ah," he said, "that's like the ladies in the pictures at the Chase; they've mostly got flowers or feathers or gold things i' their hair, but somehow I don't like to see 'em: they allays put me i' mind o' the painted women outside the shows at Treddles'on fair. What can a woman have to set her off better than her own hair, when it curls so, like yours? If a woman's young and pretty, I think you can see her good looks all the better for her

being plain dressed. Why, Dinah Morris looks very nice, for all she wears such a plain cap and gown. It seems to me as a woman's face doesna want flowers; it's almost like a flower itself. I'm sure yours is."

"Oh, very well," said Hetty, with a little playful pout, taking the rose out of her hair. "I'll put one o' Dinah's caps on when we go in, and you'll see if I look better in it. She left one behind, so I can take the pattern."

"Nay, nay, I don't want you to wear a Methodist cap like Dinah's. I daresay it's a very ugly cap, and I used to think when I saw her here, as it was nonsense for her to dress different t' other people; but I never rightly noticed her till she came to see mother last week, and then I thought the cap seemed to fit her face somehow as th' acorn cup fits th' acorn, and I shouldn't like to see her so well without it. But you've got another sort o' face; I'd have you just as you are now, without anything t' interfere with your own looks. It's like when a man's singing a good tune, you don't want t' hear bells tinkling and interfering wi' the sound."

He took her arm and put it within his again, looking down on her fondly. He was afraid she should think he had lectured her; imagining, as we are apt to do, that she had perceived all the thoughts he had only half expressed. And the thing he dreaded most was lest any cloud should come over this evening's happiness. For the world he would not have spoken of his love to Hetty yet, till this commencing kindness towards him should have grown into unmistakable love. In his imagination he saw long years of his future life stretching before him, blest with the right to call Hetty his own: he could be content with very little at present. So he took up the basket of currants once more, and they went on towards the house.

Hetty's vanity and beauty led to her ruin, and, though she agreed to marry Adam Bede, she went away to seek her lover, Arthur Don-

nithorne, and to hide her shame. Her pathetic wanderings and meditated suicide are described with true pathos, while Dinah Morris, the gentle Methodist enthusiast, who at last becomes the wife of Adam Bede, comforts and sustains her. There are other characters equally well drawn, including Mrs. Poyser, an original being whose volubility is filled with proverbial philosophy and good sense. In the following discussion on matrimony Mrs. Poyser is assisted by her husband, Mr. Irvine, the old bachelor schoolmaster and the gardener:

“What!” said Bartle, with an air of disgust. “Was there a woman concerned? Then I give you up, Adam.”

“But it’s a woman you’n spoke well on, Bartle,” said Mr. Poyser. “Come, now, you canna draw back; you said once as women wouldna ha’ been a bad invention if they’d all been like Dinah.”

“I meant her voice, man—I meant her voice, that was all,” said Bartle. “I can bear to hear her speak without wanting to put wool in my ears. As for other things, I dare say she’s like the rest o’ the women—thinks two and two’ll come to five, if she cries and bothers enough about it.”

“Ay, ay!” said Mrs. Poyser; “one ’ud think, an’ hear some folk talk, as the men war ’cute enough to count the corns in a bag o’ wheat wi’ only smelling at it. They can see through a barn-door, *they* can. Perhaps that’s the reason they can see so little o’ this side on ’t.”

Martin Poyser shook with delighted laughter, and winked at Adam, as much as to say the schoolmaster was in for it now.

“Ah;” said Bartle sneeringly, “the women are quick enough—they’re quick enough. They know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows ’em himself.”

"Like enough," said Mrs. Poyser; "for the men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun 'em, they can only catch 'em by the tail. I can count a stocking-top while a man's getting's tongue ready; an' when he out wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks take the longest hatchin'. However, I'm not denyin' the women are foolish; God Almighty made 'em to match the men."

"Match!" said Bartle; "ay, as vinegar matches one's teeth. If a man says a word, his wife'll match it with a contradiction; if he's a mind for hot meat, his wife'll match it with cold bacon; if he laughs, she'll match him with whimpering. She's such a match as the horsefly is to th' horse; she's got the right venom to sting him with—the right venom to sting him with."

"Yes," said Mrs. Poyser, "I know what the men like—a poor soft, as 'ud simper at 'em like the pictur o' the sun, whether they did right or wrong, an' say thank you for a kick, an' pretend she didna know which end she stood uppermost, till her husband told her. That's what a man wants in a wife, mostly: he wants to make sure o' one fool as'll tell him he's wise. But there's some men can do wi'out that—they think so much o' themselves a'ready—an' that's how it is there's old bachelors."

"Come, Craig," said Mr. Poyser jocosely, "you mun get married pretty quick, else you'll be set down for an old bachelor; an' you see what the women 'ull think on you."

"Well," said Mr. Craig, willing to conciliate Mrs. Poyser, and setting a high value on his own compliments, "I like a cleverish woman o' sperrit—a managing woman."

"You're out there, Craig," said Bartle dryly; "you're out there. You judge o' your garden-stuff on a better plan than that; you pick the things for what they can excel in—for what they can excel in. You don't value your peas for their roots, or your carrots for their flowers. Now that's the way you should choose women; their

cleverness'll never come to much—never come to much; but they make excellent simpletons, ripe and strong flavored.”

“What dost say to that?” said Mr. Poyser, throwing himself back and looking merrily at his wife.

“Say!” answered Mrs. Poyser, with dangerous fire kindling in her eye; “why, I say as some folk’s tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin’, not to tell you the time o’ the day, but because there’s summat wrong i’ their own inside.”

One more extract, an amusing one, must suffice. It gives us Mrs. Poyser again:

Poor Molly’s tears were dropping fast by this time, and in her desperation at the lively movement of the beer-stream towards Alick’s legs, she was converting her apron into a mop, while Mrs. Poyser, opening the cupboard, turned a blighting eye upon her.

“Ah,” she went on, “you’ll do no good wi’ crying an’ making more wet to wipe up. It’s all your own wilfulness, as I tell you, for there’s nobody no call to break anything if they’ll only go the right way to work. But wooden folks had need ha’ wooden things t’ handle. And here must I take the brown-and-white jug, as it’s niver been used three times this year, and go down i’ the cellar myself; and belike catch my death, and be laid up wi’ inflammation. . . .”

Mrs. Poyser had turned round from the cupboard with the brown-and-white jug in her hand, when she caught sight of something at the other end of the kitchen: perhaps it was because she was already trembling and nervous that the apparition had so strong an effect on her; perhaps jug-breaking, like other crimes, has a contagious influence. However it was, she stared and started like a ghost-seer, and the precious brown-and-white jug fell to the ground, parting forever with its spout and handle.

“Did ever anybody see the like?” she said, with a suddenly lowered tone, after a moment’s bewildered

glance round the room. "The jugs are bewitched, *I* think. It's them nasty glazed handles—they slip o'er the finger like a snail."

"Why, thee'st let thy own whip fly i' thy face," said her husband, who had now joined in the laugh of the young ones.

"It's all very fine to look on and grin," rejoined Mrs. Poyser; "but there's times when the crockery seems alive, an' flies out o' your hand like a bird. It's like the glass, sometimes, 'ull crack as it stands. What is to be broke *will* be broke, for I never dropped a thing i' my life for want o' holding it, else I should never ha' kept the crockery all these 'ears as I bought at my own wedding. And, Hetty, are you mad? Whativer do you mean by coming down i' that way, and making one think as there's a ghost a-walking i' th' house?"

A new outburst of laughter, while Mrs. Poyser was speaking, was caused, less by her sudden conversion to a fatalistic view of jug-breaking, than by that strange appearance of Hetty, which had startled her aunt. The little minx had found a black gown of her aunt's, and pinned it close round her neck to look like Dinah's, had made her hair as flat as she could, and had tied on one of Dinah's high-crowned borderless net-caps. The thought of Dinah's pale grave face and mild gray eyes, which the sight of the gown and cap brought with it, made it a laughable surprise enough to see them replaced by Hetty's round rosy cheeks and coquettish dark eyes. The boys got off their chairs and jumped round her, clapping their hands, and even Alick gave a low ventral laugh as he looked up from his beans. Under cover of the noise, Mrs. Poyser went into the back kitchen to send Nancy into the cellar with the great pewter measure, which had some chance of being free from bewitchment.

III. "THE MILL ON THE FLOSS." To a certain extent *The Mill on the Floss* is autobiographical; at least the intense little Maggie Tulliver is Mary Ann Evans drawn to life in

her own trying experiences of the soul. It is the tale of a brother and a sister, Tom and Maggie Tulliver, from the time we find them as children living with their parents at the old mill house on the Floss River until they meet their death in early manhood and womanhood. The characters of the two children may be understood from the following single extract:

Tom was to arrive early in the afternoon, and there was another fluttering heart besides Maggie's when it was late enough for the sound of the gig wheels to be expected; for if Mrs. Tulliver had a strong feeling, it was fondness for her boy. At last the sound came,—that quick light bowling of the gig wheels,—and in spite of the wind, which was blowing the clouds about, and was not likely to respect Mrs. Tulliver's curls and cap-strings, she came outside the door and even held her hand on Maggie's offending head, forgetting all the griefs of the morning.

“There he is, my sweet lad! But, Lord ha' mercy! he's got never a collar on; it's been lost on the road, I'll be bound, and spoilt the set.”

Mrs. Tulliver stood with her arms open; Maggie jumped first on one leg and then on the other; while Tom descended from the gig, and said, with masculine reticence as to the tender emotions, “Hallo! Yap—what! are you there?”

Nevertheless he submitted to be kissed willingly enough, though Maggie hung on his neck in rather a strangling fashion, while his blue-gray eyes wandered toward the croft and the lambs and the river, where he promised himself that he would begin to fish the first thing to-morrow morning. He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and at twelve or thirteen years of age look as much alike as goslings,—a lad with *light-brown hair, cheeks of cream and roses, full lips, indeterminate nose and eyebrows,—face in which it*

seems impossible to see anything but boyhood; as different as possible from poor Maggie's phiz, which Nature seemed to have molded and colored with the most decided intention. But that same Nature has the deep cunning which hides itself under the appearance of openness, so that simple people think they can see through her quite well, and all the while she is secretly preparing a refutation of their confident prophecies. Under these average boyish physiognomies that she seems to turn off by the gross, she conceals some of her most rigid, inflexible purposes, some of her most unmodified characters; and the dark-eyed, rebellious girl may after all turn out to be a passive being compared with this pink-and-white bit of masculinity with the indeterminate features.

"Maggie," said Tom, confidentially, taking her into a corner, as soon as his mother was gone out to examine his box, and the warm parlor had taken off the chill he had felt from the long drive, "you don't know what I've got in *my* pockets," nodding his head up and down as a means of rousing her sense of mystery.

"No," said Maggie. "How stodgy they look, Tom! Is it marls [marbles] or cobnuts?" Maggie's heart sank a little, because Tom always said it was "no good" playing with *her* at those games, she played so badly.

"Marls! no; I've swopped all my marls with the little fellows, and cobnuts are no fun, you silly, only when the nuts are green. But see here!" He drew something half out of his right-hand pocket.

"What is it?" said Maggie, in a whisper. "I can see nothing but a bit of yellow."

"Why, it's—a—new—guess, Maggie!"

"Oh, I *can't* guess, Tom," said Maggie, impatiently.

"Don't be a spitfire, else I won't tell you," said Tom, thrusting his hand back into his pocket and looking determined.

"No, Tom," said Maggie, imploringly, laying hold of the arm that was held stiffly in the pocket. "I'm not cross, Tom; it was only because I can't bear guessing. *Please* be good to me."

Tom's arm slowly relaxed, and he said, “Well, then, it's a new fish line—two new uns,—one for you, Maggie, all to yourself. And here's hooks; see here—I say, *won't* we go and fish to-morrow down by the Round Pool? And you shall catch your own fish, Maggie, and put the worms on, and everything; won't it be fun?”

Maggie's answer was to throw her arms round Tom's neck and hug him, and hold her cheek against his without speaking, while he slowly unwound some of the line, saying, after a pause,—

“Wasn't I a good brother, now, to buy you a line all to yourself? You know, I needn't have bought it, if I hadn't liked.”

“Yes, very, very good—I *do* love you, Tom.” Tom had put the line back in his pocket, and was looking at the hooks one by one, before he spoke again.

“And the fellows fought me, because I wouldn't give in about the toffee.”

“Oh, dear! I wish they wouldn't fight at your school, Tom. Didn't it hurt you?”

“Hurt me? no,” said Tom, putting up the hooks again, taking out a large pocketknife, and slowly opening the largest blade, which he looked at meditatively as he rubbed his finger along it. Then he added,—

“I gave Spouncer a black eye, I know; that's what he got by wanting to leather *me*; I wasn't going to go halves because anybody leathered me.”

“Oh, how brave you are, Tom! I think you're like Samson. If there came a lion roaring at me, I think you'd fight him, wouldn't you, Tom?”

“How can a lion come roaring at you, you silly thing? There's no lions, only in the show.”

“No, but if we were in the lion countries—I mean in Africa, where it's very hot; the lions eat people there. I can show it you in the book where I read it.”

“Well, I should get a gun and shoot him.”

“But if you hadn't got a gun,—we might have gone out, you know, not thinking, just as we go fishing; and then a great lion might run toward us roaring, and we

couldn't get away from him. What should you do, Tom?"

Tom paused, and at last turned away contemptuously, saying, "But the lion *isn't* coming. What's the use of talking?"

"But I like to fancy how it would be," said Maggie, following him. "Just think what you would do, Tom."

"Oh, don't bother, Maggie! you're such a silly. I shall go and see my rabbits."

Maggie's heart began to flutter with fear. She dared not tell the sad truth at once, but she walked after Tom in trembling silence as he went out, thinking how she could tell him the news so as to soften at once his sorrow and his anger; for Maggie dreaded Tom's anger of all things; it was quite different anger from her own.

"Tom," she said, timidly, when they were out of doors, "how much money did you give for your rabbits?"

"Two half-crowns and a sixpence," said Tom, promptly.

"I think I've got a great deal more than that in my steel purse upstairs. I'll ask mother to give it you."

"What for?" said Tom. "I don't want *your* money, you silly thing. I've got a great deal more money than you, because I'm a boy. I always have half-sovereigns and sovereigns for my Christmas boxes because I shall be a man, and you have only five-shilling pieces, because you're only a girl."

"Well, but, Tom—if mother would let me give you two half-crowns and a sixpence out of my purse to put into your pocket and spend, you know, and buy some more rabbits with it?"

"More rabbits? I don't want any more."

"Oh, but Tom, they're all dead."

Tom stopped immediately in his walk and turned round toward Maggie. "You forgot to feed 'em, then?" he said, his color heightening for a moment, but soon subsiding. "I don't love you, Maggie. You shan't go fishing with me to-morrow. I told you to go and see the rabbits every day." He walked on again.

“Yes, but I forgot—and I couldn’t help it, indeed, Tom. I’m so very sorry,” said Maggie, while the tears rushed fast.

“You’re a naughty girl,” said Tom, severely, “and I’m sorry I bought you the fish line. I don’t love you.”

“Oh, Tom, it’s very cruel,” sobbed Maggie. “I’d forgive you, if *you* forgot anything—I wouldn’t mind what you did—I’d forgive you and love you.”

“Yes, you’re a silly; but I never *do* forget things, I don’t.”

“Oh, please forgive me, Tom; my heart will break,” said Maggie, shaking with sobs, clinging to Tom’s arm, and laying her wet cheek on his shoulder.

Tom shook her off, and stopped again, saying in a peremptory tone, “Now, Maggie, you just listen. Aren’t I a good brother to you?”

“Ye-ye-es,” sobbed Maggie, her chin rising and falling convulsedly.

“Didn’t I think about your fish line all this quarter, and mean to buy it, and saved my money o’ purpose, and wouldn’t go halves in the toffee, and Spouncer fought me because I wouldn’t?”

“Ye-ye-es—and I—lo-lo-love you so, Tom.”

“But you’re a naughty girl. Last holidays you licked the paint off my lozenge box, and the holidays before that you let the boat drag my fish line down when I’d set you to watch it, and you pushed your head through my kite, all for nothing.”

“But I didn’t mean,” said Maggie; “I couldn’t help it.”

“Yes, you could,” said Tom, “if you’d minded what you were doing. And you’re a naughty girl, and you sha’n’t go fishing with me to-morrow.”

With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie toward the mill. Maggie stood motionless, except from her sobs, for a minute or two; then she turned round and ran into the house, and up to her attic, where she sat on the floor and laid her head against the worm-eaten shelf, with a crushing sense of misery. Tom was

come home, and she had thought how happy she should be; and now he was cruel to her. What use was anything if Tom didn't love her? Oh, he was very cruel! Hadn't she wanted to give him the money, and said how very sorry she was? She knew she was naughty to her mother, but she had never been naughty to Tom—had never *meant* to be naughty to him.

"Oh, he is cruel!" Maggie sobbed aloud, finding a wretched pleasure in the hollow resonance that came through the long empty space of the attic. She never thought of beating or grinding her Fetish; she was too miserable to be angry.

These bitter sorrows of childhood! when sorrow is all new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the days and weeks, and the space from summer to summer seems measureless.

Maggie soon thought she had been hours in the attic, and it must be tea time, and they were all having their tea, and not thinking of her. Well, then, she would stay up there and starve herself,—hide herself behind the tub, and stay there all night,—and then they would all be frightened, and Tom would be sorry. Thus Maggie thought in the pride of her heart, as she crept behind the tub; but presently she began to cry again at the idea that they didn't mind her being there. If she went down again to Tom now—would he forgive her? Perhaps her father would be there, and he would take her part. But then she wanted Tom to forgive her because he loved her, not because his father told him. No, she would never go down if Tom didn't come to fetch her. This resolution lasted in great intensity for five dark minutes behind the tub; but then the need of being loved—the strongest need in poor Maggie's nature—began to wrestle with her pride; and soon threw it. She crept from behind the tub into the twilight of the long attic, but just then she heard a quick footstep on the stairs.

Tom had been too much interested in his talk with Luke, in going the round of the premises, walking in

and out where he pleased, and whittling sticks without any particular reason,—except that he didn’t whittle sticks at school,—to think of Maggie and the effect his anger had produced on her. He meant to punish her, and that business having been performed, he occupied himself with other matters, like a practical person. But when he had been called in to tea, his father said, “Why, where’s the little wench?” and Mrs. Tulliver, almost at the same moment, said, “Where’s your little sister?”—both of them having supposed that Maggie and Tom had been together all the afternoon.

“I don’t know,” said Tom. He didn’t want to “tell” of Maggie, though he was angry with her; for Tom Tulliver was a lad of honor.

“What! hasn’t she been playing with you all this while?” said the father. “She’d been thinking o’ nothing but your coming home.”

“I haven’t seen her this two hours,” says Tom, commencing on the plumcake.

“Goodness heart! she’s got drowned!” exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver, rising from her seat and running to the window. “How could you let her do so?” she added, as became a fearful woman, accusing she didn’t know whom of she didn’t know what.

“Nay, nay, she’s none drowned,” said Mr. Tulliver. “You’ve been naughty to her, I doubt, Tom?”

“I’m sure I haven’t, father,” said Tom indignantly. “I think she’s in the house.”

“Perhaps up in that attic,” said Mrs. Tulliver, “a-singing and talking to herself, and forgetting all about meal times.”

“You go and fetch her down, Tom,” said Mr. Tulliver, rather sharply,—his perspicacity or his fatherly fondness for Maggie making him suspect that the lad had been hard upon “the little un,” else she would never have left his side. “And be good to her, do you hear? Else I’ll let you know better.”

Tom never disobeyed his father, for Mr. Tulliver was *a peremptory man, and, as he said, would never let any-*

body get hold of his whip hand; but he went out rather sullenly, carrying his piece of plumcake, and not intending to reprieve Maggie's punishment, which was no more than she deserved. Tom was only thirteen, and had no decided views in grammar and arithmetic, regarding them for the most part as open questions, but he was particularly clear and positive on one point,—namely, that he would punish everybody who deserved it. Why, he wouldn't have minded being punished himself if he deserved it; but, then, he never *did* deserve it.

It was Tom's step, then, that Maggie heard on the stairs, when her need of love had triumphed over her pride, and she was going down with her swollen eyes and dishevelled hair to beg for pity. At least her father would stroke her head and say, "Never mind, my wench." It is a wonderful subduer, this need of love,—this hunger of the heart,—as peremptory as that other hunger by which Nature forces us to submit to the yoke, and change the face of the world.

But she knew Tom's step, and her heart began to beat violently with the sudden shock of hope. He only stood still at the top of the stairs and said, "Maggie, you're to come down." But she rushed to him and clung round his neck, sobbing, "Oh, Tom, please forgive me—I can't bear it—I will always be good—always remember things—do love me—please, dear Tom!"

We learn to restrain ourselves as we get older. We keep apart when we have quarreled, express ourselves in well-bred phrases, and in this way preserve a dignified alienation, showing much firmness on one side, and swallowing much grief on the other. We no longer approximate in our behavior to the mere impulsiveness of the lower animals, but conduct ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilized society. Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his, and kiss his ear in a random sobbing way; and there were tender fibers in the lad that had been used to answer to Maggie's fondling, so that he behaved with a weakness quite inconsistent with his

resolution to punish her as much as she deserved. He actually began to kiss her in return, and say,—

“Don’t cry, then, Magsie; here, eat a bit o’ cake.”

Maggie’s sobs began to subside, and she put out her mouth for the cake and bit a piece; and then Tom bit a piece, just for company, and they ate together and rubbed each other’s cheeks and brows and noses together, while they ate, with a humiliating resemblance to two friendly ponies.

“Come along, Magsie, and have tea,” said Tom at last, when there was no more cake except what was downstairs.

So ended the sorrows of this day, and the next morning Maggie was trotting with her own fishing rod in one hand and a handle of the basket in the other, stepping always, by a peculiar gift, in the muddiest places, and looking darkly radiant from under her beaver-bonnet because Tom was good to her. She had told Tom, however, that she should like him to put the worms on the hook for her, although she accepted his word when he assured her that worms couldn’t feel (it was Tom’s private opinion that it didn’t much matter if they did). He knew all about worms, and fish, and those things; and what birds were mischievous, and how padlocks opened, and which way the handles of the gates were to be lifted. Maggie thought this sort of knowledge was very wonderful,—much more difficult than remembering what was in the books; and she was rather in awe of Tom’s superiority, for he was the only person who called her knowledge “stuff,” and did not feel surprised at her cleverness. Tom, indeed, was of opinion that Maggie was a silly little thing; all girls were silly,—they couldn’t throw a stone so as to hit anything, couldn’t do anything with a pocket-knife, and were frightened at frogs. Still, he was very fond of his sister, and meant always to take care of her, make her his housekeeper, and punish her when she did wrong.

They were on their way to the Round Pool,—that wonderful pool, which the floods had made a long while

ago. No one knew how deep it was; and it was mysterious, too, that it should be almost a perfect round, framed in with willows and tall reeds, so that the water was only to be seen when you got close to the brink. The sight of the old favorite spot always heightened Tom's good humor, and he spoke to Maggie in the most amicable whispers, as he opened the precious basket and prepared their tackle. He threw her line for her, and put the rod into her hand. Maggie thought it probable that the small fish would come to her hook, and the large ones to Tom's. But she had forgotten all about the fish, and was looking dreamily at the glassy water when Tom said, in a loud whisper, "Look, look, Maggie!" and came running to prevent her from snatching her line away.

Maggie was frightened lest she had been doing something wrong, as usual, but presently Tom drew out her line and brought a large tench bouncing on the grass.

Tom was excited.

"O Magsie, you little duck! Empty the basket."

Maggie was not conscious of unusual merit, but it was enough that Tom called her Magsie, and was pleased with her. There was nothing to mar her delight in the whispers and the dreamy silences, when she listened to the light dipping sounds of the rising fish, and the gentle rustling, as if the willows and the reeds and the water had their happy whisperings also. Maggie thought it would make a very nice heaven to sit by the pool in that way, and never be scolded. She never knew she had a bite till Tom told her; but she liked fishing very much.

IV. "ROMOLA." One of the most striking examples of the power to delineate in fiction the development of the human character is found in Tito Melema, who in *Romola* grows from a promising youth to a wasted and criminal manhood. He comes to be what he is by the slow action of those immutable laws of psychological development, of whose meaning the

author knew so much. If in her later novels she carried her analysis of character to an extreme, there is no evidence of it in this novel. An historical tale of Italian life in the days of Savonarola, it is a highly finished, eloquent, artistic work, which many regard as her greatest intellectual effort, though other readers care more for the earnestness and truthfulness of her English pictures. But in the Italian novel George Eliot depicts most accurately those turbulent times when Florence was aroused to fury by the teachings of Savonarola and paints her Florentine figures on a broad canvas, for the purpose of showing us in the light of modern science the effect of the great religious struggle upon two persons like Romola and her lover.

V. “SILAS MARNER.” Readers who admire an artistic setting, delicately drawn characters and the harmonious rendering of a well-balanced plot, will classify *Silas Marner* as one of her best works. Silas is a weaver, a wronged and injured Dissenter, a solitary, unhappy man, but the golden-haired Eppie is a thoroughly poetic creation. The moral of this somewhat painful story may be summed up in the quoted words: “You were hard done by once, Mr. Marner, and it seems as if you’ll never know the rights of it; but that doesn’t hinder there *being* a rights, Master Marner, for all it’s dark to you and me.”

VI. “MIDDLEMARCH.” Many critics rank *Middlemarch* as her best novel, and, though

one of the later ones, it is certainly a complex and highly finished study of many separate lives, which, while possibly lacking unity to some degree and carrying the analysis of character farther than the average reader will enjoy, seems to uphold the author's reputation and to justify the welcome which the expectant critics gave it upon its appearance. We have space only for one brief extract, *Unfulfilled Aspirations*:

Who that cares much to know the history of man, and how the mysterious mixture behaves under the varying experiments of time, has not dwelt, at least briefly, on the life of Saint Theresa, has not smiled with some gentleness at the thought of the little girl walking forth one morning hand-in-hand with her still smaller brother, to go and seek martyrdom in the country of the Moors? Out they toddled from rugged Avila, wide-eyed and helpless-looking as two fawns, but with human hearts, already beating to a national idea; until domestic reality met them in the shape of uncles, and turned them back from their great resolve. That child-pilgrimage was a fit beginning. Theresa's passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life: what were many-volumned romances of chivalry and the social conquests of a brilliant girl to her? Her flame quickly burned up that light fuel; and, fed from within, soared after some illimitable satisfaction, some object which would never justify weariness, which would reconcile self-despair with the rapturous consciousness of life beyond self. She found her epos in the reform of a religious order.

That Spanish woman who lived three hundred years ago, was certainly not the last of her kind. Many Therasas have been born who found for themselves no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far-resonant action; perhaps only a life of mistakes, the offspring of a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with

the meanness of opportunity; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred poet, and sank unwept into oblivion. With dim lights and tangled circumstance they tried to shape their thought and deed in noble agreement; but after all, to common eyes their struggles seemed mere inconsistency and formlessness; for these later-born Theresas were helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul. Their ardor alternated between a vague ideal and the common yearning of womanhood; so that the one was disapproved as extravagance, and the other condemned as a lapse.

Some have felt that these blundering lives are due to the inconvenient indefiniteness with which the Supreme Power has fashioned the natures of women; if there were one level of feminine incompetence as strict as the ability to count three and no more, the social lot of women might be treated with scientific certitude. Meanwhile, the indefiniteness remains, and the limits of variation are really much wider than any one would imagine from the sameness of women's coiffure and the favorite love stories in prose and verse. Here and there a cygnet is reared uneasily among the ducklings in the brown pond, and never finds the living stream in fellowship with his own oary-footed kind. Here and there is born a Saint Theresa, foundress of nothing, whose loving heart beats and sobs after an unattained goodness, tremble off, and are dispersed among hindrances, instead of centering in some long-recognizable deed.

We have not mentioned *Felix Holt*, which was a return to English middle-class life after the Italy of *Romola*, nor *Daniel Deronda*, George Eliot's last "big book," a story of modern English life, a study of Jewish character, and in spite of its profundity and deadening prolixity containing some sketches as powerfully drawn as anything in fiction.

VII. THE BRONTËS. "Of the multitude that have read her books, who has not known and deplored the tragedy of her family, her own most sad and untimely fate? Which of her readers has not become her friend? Who that has known her books has not admired the artist's noble English, the burning love of truth, the bravery, the simplicity, the indignation at wrong, the eager sympathy, the pious love and reverence, the passionate honor, so to speak, of the woman? What a story is that of that family of poets in their solitude yonder on the gloomy northern moors!"

The above quotation from Thackeray sums up the character and genius of Charlotte Brontë and her talented sister in a generous and appreciative manner, for never has a family of literary geniuses had so pathetic an existence and so little assistance from the outside world. The Rev. Patrick Brontë held a small living in Yorkshire, and there in 1816 his third daughter, Charlotte, was born, and later a son, Patrick Bramwell, and two more daughters, Emily Jane and Anne. In 1820 the father moved his family of seven to Haworth, where, in a "low, oblong stone parsonage," "high up, yet with a still higher background of sweeping moors," they began the life that was to be identified with that retired and depressing spot. A year later the mother died, followed four years afterward by the two elder sisters; then the four younger children were left largely to their own resources.

Patrick Brontë was a cultured gentleman of literary tastes, but stern, strict and peculiar, unambitious, eccentric and apparently contented in a way through his forty years of residence at Haworth. The children were naturally delicate, and when Charlotte and Emily were sent with their sisters to school at Cowan's Bridge, they were very unhappy and suffered great hardships, which terminated a few months later in the death of the two older sisters, after which Charlotte and Emily were taken home. Here for six years Charlotte remained quite alone with the other children, none finding community of interest with the rough and obstinate Yorkshire peasantry and all retiring within themselves to create an imaginary world of their own. Busy during the day with their household cares and occupations, the evenings were their own and were spent largely around the kitchen table, where they composed fairy tales, poems and dramas. A great quantity of their manuscripts still exists, all written in almost microscopic text, but when deciphered showing vividly the precocity and imaginative nature of the little Brontës.

In 1831 Charlotte entered a small boarding-school at Roe Head, and here for a few years was comparatively happy with the principal, a Miss Woollers, who seems to have understood the peculiar temperament of her little pupil. Mrs. Gaskell, in her biography, has given us a picture of Charlotte at this age:

She was a quiet, thoughtful girl, of nearly fifteen years of age, very small in figure—"stunted" was the word she applied to herself,—but as her limbs and head were in just proportion to the slight, fragile body, no word in ever so slight a degree suggestive of deformity could properly be applied to her; with soft, thick, brown hair, and peculiar eyes, of which I find it difficult to give a description, as they appeared to me in her later life. They were large, and well shaped; their color a reddish brown; but if the iris was closely examined, it appeared to be composed of a great variety of tints. The usual expression was of quiet, listening intelligence; but now and then, on some just occasion for vivid interest or wholesome indignation, a light would shine out, as if some spiritual lamp had been kindled, which glowed behind those expressive orbs. I never saw the like in any other human creature. As for the rest of her features, they were plain, large, and ill set; but, unless you began to catalogue them, you were hardly aware of the fact, for the eyes and power of the countenance overbalanced every physical defect; the crooked mouth and the large nose were forgotten, and the whole face arrested the attention, and presently attracted all those whom she herself would have cared to attract. Her hands and feet were the smallest I ever saw; when one of the former was placed in mine, it was like the soft touch of a bird in the middle of my palm. The delicate long fingers had a peculiar fineness of sensation, which was one reason why all her handiwork, of whatever kind—writing, sewing, knitting—was so clear in its minuteness. She was remarkably neat in her whole personal attire; but she was dainty as to the fit of her shoes and gloves.

I can well imagine that the grave serious composure, which, when I knew her, gave her face the dignity of an old Venetian portrait, was no acquisition of later years, but dated from that early age when she found herself in the position of an elder sister to motherless children. But in a girl only just entered on her teens, such an expression would be called (to use a country phrase) "old-

fashioned ;'' and in 1831, the period of which I now write, we must think of her as a little, set, antiquated girl, very quiet in manners, and very quaint in dress ; for, besides the influence exerted by her father's ideas concerning the simplicity of attire befitting the wife and daughters of a country clergyman as evinced in his destruction of the colored boots and the silk gown), her aunt, on whom the duty of dressing her nieces principally devolved, had never been in society since she left Penzance, eight or nine years before, and the Penzance fashions of that day were still dear to her heart.

Charlotte was twenty-two when she left Roe Head to take a situation as governess, and for several years she and her sister were engaged in teaching, but though gifted and full of learning, they had little ability to transmit knowledge, and found their existence a constant torment. In 1842 Charlotte and Emily, desiring to perfect their knowledge of French, entered a school at Brussels, where they made rapid progress and were comparatively happy, though their anxiety to learn was so intense that they buried themselves in their books and made no friends or acquaintances. Subsequently, Charlotte returned there to teach for a year, but early in 1844 the sisters were back at Haworth, again trying to obtain pupils in a private school. This was one of the darkest periods of their lives, and the future appeared forbidding enough. About this time they made the mutual discovery that all three had secretly been writing poetry, and, though advised against it, they gathered their poems and published them in a slender volume under the title

of *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell*. The book was a complete failure, only two copies being sold in a year. As though this were not enough to discourage them all, the manuscript of *The Professor*, Charlotte's first novel, traveled the rounds of the London publishers and found none who would consent to produce it; in fact, it did not see light until after the author's death.

But all these discouraging physical events were as nothing compared to the grief and shame that came to the family from within. The father was rapidly growing blind; Patrick Bramwell, the brilliant and idolized son and brother, had become a dissipated wreck, broken by a fantastic love affair with a married woman and the victim of both the liquor and opium habits. His terrible death, which followed immediately after he had learned of the faithlessness of the object of his infatuation, whose husband had just died, was followed very shortly by the death of Emily Brontë in December, 1848, and of Anne in May, 1849, leaving Charlotte the only survivor of the six children. However, it was during these terrible years that *Jane Eyre* appeared anonymously as the work of Currer Bell, for, in spite of the horror of her existence, Charlotte had had the courage to write one of the most successful and worthy novels of the Victorian Age. Besides, Emily and Anne Brontë had published together in one volume their stories of *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey*.



Photo: Ewing Gallouay

CHARLOTTE BRONTË
1816-1855

Charlotte was now famous, and in 1849 she went to London, where, meeting Thackeray and Miss Martineau, she began a more public life in pleasanter surroundings. Yet, she was ever retiring, shy, and possessed by an almost unconquerable aversion to appearing before people. Less than a year before she died, she married her father's curate, Arthur Bell Nicholls, an excellent man, whose loving care gave the sufferer many happy hours. In one of her books, published before the days of his courtship, she had, under the name of one of the characters, paid him this tribute: "He labored faithfully in the parish; the schools, both Sunday and day schools, flourished under his sway like green bay trees. Being human, of course he had his faults; these, however, were proper, steady-going, clerical faults." Though a happy married life, its brevity gives the last pitiful touch to the tragic existence of the diminutive authoress, who passed away early in 1855.

VIII. THE NOVELS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *Jane Eyre* is incomparably the best of the Brontë novels and a book that, in spite of some laxity in plot and an extravagance of incident, will continue to hold a high place in the minds of intelligent readers of fiction. Gosse has spoken of it as follows: "Here were a sweep of tragic passion, a broad delineation of elemental hatred and love, a fusion of romantic intrigue with grave and sinister landscape such as had never been experienced in fiction

before; to find their parallel it was necessary to go back to the wild drama of Elizabeth."

Like all of her books, *Jane Eyre* is largely autobiographical, not romantic, but realistic in the best sense of the word. The description of the cruelties and barbarities in the training of Jane Eyre are drawn from Charlotte's own experiences at Cowan's Bridge, and the authoress maintained their substantial correctness in all subsequent times. The beautiful character of Helen Burns is a portrait of her older sister Maria; many of the characters in the story are but thinly veiled from the original, and many incidents descriptions of actual occurrences. The anonymity of *Jane Eyre* and its extraordinary popularity gave Charlotte an opportunity to read the criticisms upon her work and these afforded her not a little amusement, for few, if any, of them attributed the authorship to a woman, and indeed the style is of such masculine vigor that few traces of femininity are to be found. That it is a masterly piece of prose every one admits. So unconventional and free is it in many respects that it met with a great deal of criticism and was by some considered an immoral book. Charlotte's own defense of it appears sufficient: "Conventionality is not morality. Self-righteousness is not religion. To attack the first is not to assail the last. To pluck the mask from the face of the Pharisee is not to lift an impious hand to the Crown of Thorns."

Its style may be judged from an extract:

To this house I came, just ere dark, on an evening marked by the characteristics of sad sky, cold gale, and continued small, penetrating rain. The last mile I performed on foot, having dismissed the chaise and driver with the double remuneration I had promised. Even when within a very short distance of the manor-house you could see nothing of it, so thick and dark grew the timber of the gloomy wood about it. Iron gates between granite pillars showed me where to enter, and passing through them, I found myself at once in the twilight of close-ranked trees. There was a grass-grown track descending the forest aisle, between hoar and knotty shafts and under branched arches. I followed it, expecting soon to reach the dwelling; but it stretched on and on, it wound far and farther: no sign of habitation or grounds was visible.

I thought I had taken a wrong direction and lost my way. The darkness of natural as well as of sylvan dusk gathered over me. I looked round in search of another road. There was none: all was interwoven stem, columnar trunk, dense summer foliage—no opening anywhere.

I proceeded: at last my way opened, the trees thinned a little; presently I beheld a railing, then the house—scarce, by this dim light, distinguishable from the trees; so dank and green were its decaying walls. Entering a portal, fastened only by a latch, I stood amidst a space of enclosed ground, from which the wood swept away in a semicircle. There were no flowers, no garden-beds; only a broad gravel-walk girdling a grass-plot, and this set in the heavy frame of the forest. The house presented two pointed gables in its front; the windows were latticed and narrow; the front door was narrow too, one step led up to it. The whole looked, as the host of the Rochester Arms had said, “quite a desolate spot.” It was as still as a church on a week-day: the pattering rain on the forest leaves was the only sound audible in its vicinage.

“Can there be life here?” I asked.

Yes: life of some kind there was: for I heard a movement—that narrow front door was unclosing, and some shape was about to issue from the grange.

It opened slowly: a figure came out into the twilight and stood on the step; a man without a hat: he stretched forth his hand as if to feel whether it rained. Dusk as it was, I had recognized him—it was my master, Edward Fairfax Rochester, and no other.

The independence of Miss Brontë's thought and the courageousness of her convictions may be gathered from her words on the sphere of woman:

It is vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity; they must have action; and they will make it if they cannot find it. Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Women are supposed to be very calm generally; but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex.

Shirley appeared in 1849, and during the period in which it was composed Bramwell, Emily and Anne were all called away. One can scarcely conceive the agony under which it must have been written, but probably the very act of composition was a help to the grief-stricken woman. The heroine, Shirley Keel-

dar, is her sister Emily idealized, and here, as elsewhere, many of the incidents are actual occurrences. In fact, it seemed impossible for Charlotte to go far outside her own experiences. *Shirley* and *Jane Eyre* relate those of her life in England, while *The Professor* and *Villette* are no less faithful to her experiences in Brussels. None reach the heights of *Jane Eyre*, but *Shirley* ranks next to it.

From *Shirley* comes the following extract:

Shirley showed she had been sincere in saying she should be glad of Caroline's society, by frequently seeking it: and, indeed, if she had not sought it, she would not have had it; for Miss Helstone was slow to make fresh acquaintances. She was always held back by the idea that people could not want her—that she could not amuse them; and a brilliant, happy, youthful creature, like the heiress of Fieldhead, seemed to her too completely independent of society so uninteresting as hers, ever to find it really welcome.

Shirley might be brilliant, and probably happy likewise, but no one is independent of genial society; and though in about a month she had made the acquaintance of most of the families round, and was on quite free and easy terms with all the Misses Sykes, and all the Misses Pearson, and the two superlative Misses Wynne of Walden Hall; yet, it appeared, she found none amongst them very genial: she fraternized with none of them, to use her own words. If she had had the bliss to be really Shirley Keeldar, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Briarfield, there was not a single fair one in this and the two neighboring parishes, whom she should have felt disposed to request to become Mrs. Keeldar, lady of the manor. This declaration she made to Mrs. Pryor, who received it very quietly, as she did most of her pupil's off-hand speeches, responding—"My dear, do not allow that habit of alluding to yourself as a gentleman to be confirmed: it is a

strange one. Those who do not know you, hearing you speak thus, would think you affected masculine manners."

Shirley never laughed at her former governess: even the little formalities and harmless peculiarities of that lady were respectable in her eyes: had it been otherwise, she would have proved herself a weak character at once: for it is only the weak who make a butt of quiet worth; therefore she took her remonstrance in silence. She stood quietly near the window, looking at the grand cedar on her lawn, watching a bird on one of its lower boughs. Presently she began to chirrup to the bird: soon her chirrup grew clearer; ere long she was whistling; the whistle struck into a tune, deftly executed.

"My dear!" expostulated Mrs. Pryor.

"Was I whistling?" said Shirley; "I forgot. I beg your pardon, ma'am. I had resolved to take care not to whistle before you."

"But, Miss Keeldar, where did you learn to whistle? You must have got the habit since you came down into Yorkshire. I never knew you guilty of it before."

"Oh! I learned to whistle a long while ago."

"Who taught you?"

"No one: I took it up by listening, and I had laid it down again; but lately, yesterday evening, as I was coming up our lane, I heard a gentleman whistling that very tune in the field on the other side of the hedge, and that reminded me."

"What gentleman was it?"

"We have only one gentleman in this region, ma'am, and that is Mr. Moore; at least he is the only gentleman who is not gray-haired: my two venerable favorites, Mr. Helstone and Mr. Yorke, it is true, are fine old beaux; infinitely better than any of the stupid young ones."

Mrs. Pryor was silent.

"You do like Mr. Helstone, ma'am?"

"My dear, Mr. Helstone's office secures him from criticism."

"You generally contrive to leave the room when he is announced."

"Do you walk out this morning, my dear?"

"Yes, I shall go to the Rectory, and seek and find Caroline Helstone, and make her take some exercise: she shall have a breezy walk over Nunnely Common."

"If you go in that direction, my dear, have the goodness to remind Miss Helstone to wrap up well, as there is a fresh wind, and she appears to me to require care."

"You shall be minutely obeyed, Mrs. Pryor: meantime, will you not accompany us yourself?"

"No, my love; I should be a restraint upon you: I am stout, and cannot walk so quickly as you would wish to do."

Shirley easily persuaded Caroline to go with her: and when they were fairly out on the quiet road, traversing the extensive and solitary sweep of Nunnely Common, she as easily drew her into conversation. The first feelings of diffidence overcome, Caroline soon felt glad to talk with Miss Keeldar. The very first interchange of slight observations sufficed to give each an idea of what the other was. Shirley said she liked the green sweep of the common turf, and, better still, the heath on its ridges, for the heath reminded her of moors: she had seen moors when she was traveling on the borders near Scotland. She remembered particularly a district traversed one long afternoon, on a sultry but sunless day in summer: they journeyed from noon till sunset, over what seemed a boundless waste of deep heath, and nothing had they seen but wild sheep; nothing heard but the cries of wild birds.

"I know how the heath would look on such a day," said Caroline; "purple-black: a deeper shade of the sky-tint, and that would be livid."

"Yes—quite livid, with brassy edges to the clouds, and here and there a white gleam, more ghastly than the lurid tinge, which, as you looked at it, you momentarily expected would kindle into blinding lightning."

"Did it thunder?"

"It muttered distant peals, but the storm did not break till evening, after we had reached our inn: that inn

being an isolated house at the foot of a range of mountains."

"Did you watch the clouds come down over the mountains?"

"I did: I stood at the window an hour watching them. The hills seemed rolled in a sullen mist, and when the rain fell in whitening sheets, suddenly they were blotted from the prospect: they were washed from the world."

"I have seen such storms in hilly districts in Yorkshire; and at their riotous climax, while the sky was all cataract, the earth all flood, I have remembered the Deluge."

"It is singularly reviving after such hurricanes to feel calm return, and from the opening clouds to receive a consolatory gleam, softly testifying that the sun is not quenched."

"Miss Keeldar, just stand still now, and look down at Nunnely dale and wood."

They both halted on the green brow of the Common: they looked down on the deep valley robed in May raiment; on varied meads, some pearly with daisies, and some golden with king-cups: to-day all this young verdure smiled clear in sunlight; transparent emerald and amber gleams played over it. On Nunnwood—the sole remnant of antique British forest in a region whose lowlands were once all sylvan chase, as its highlands were breast-deep heather—slept the shadow of a cloud; the distant hills were dappled, the horizon was shaded and tinted like mother-of-pearl; silvery blues, soft purples, evanescent greens and rose-shades, all melting into fleeces of white cloud, pure as azury snow, allured the eye as with a remote glimpse of heaven's foundations. . . .

"Our England is a bonnie island," said Shirley, "and Yorkshire is one of her bonniest nooks."

"You are a Yorkshire girl too?"

"I am—Yorkshire in blood and birth. Five generations of my race sleep under the aisles of Briarfield Church: I drew my first breath in the old black hall behind us."

Hereupon Caroline presented her hand, which was accordingly taken and shaken. "We are compatriots," said she.

"Yes," agreed Shirley, with a grave nod.

"And that," asked Miss Keeldar, pointing to the forest—"that is Nunnwood?"

"It is."

"Were you ever there?"

"Many a time."

"In the heart of it?"

"Yes."

"What is it like?"

"It is like an encampment of forest sons of Anak. The trees are huge and old. When you stand at their roots, the summits seem in another region: the trunks remain still and firm as pillars, while the boughs sway to every breeze. In the deepest calm their leaves are never quite hushed, and in high wind a flood rushes—a sea thunders above you."

"Was it not one of Robin Hood's haunts?" asked Miss Keeldar.

"Yes, and there are mementos of him still existing. To penetrate into Nunnwood, Miss Keeldar, is to go far back into the dim days of eld. Can you see a break in the forest, about the center?"

"Yes, distinctly."

"That break is a dell; a deep, hollow cup, lined with turf as green and short as the sod of this Common: the very oldest of the trees, gnarled mighty oaks, crowd about the brink of this dell: in the bottom lie the ruins of a nunnery."

"We will go—you and I alone, Caroline—to that wood, early some fine summer morning, and spend a long day there. We can take pencils and sketch-books, and any interesting reading-book we like; and of course we shall take something to eat. I have two little baskets, in which Mrs. Gill, my housekeeper, might pack our provisions, and we could each carry our own. It would not tire you too much to walk so far?"

"Oh, no; especially if we rested the whole day in the wood, and I know all the pleasant spots: I know where we could get nuts in nutting time; I know where wild strawberries abound: I know certain lonely, quite untrodden glades, carpeted with strange mosses, some yellow as if gilded, some a sober gray, some gem-green. I know groups of trees that ravish the eye with their perfect, picture-like effects: rude oak, delicate birch, glossy beech, clustered in contrast; and ash trees stately as Saul, standing isolated, and superannuated wood-giants clad in bright shrouds of ivy. Miss Keeldar, I could guide you."

"You would be dull with me alone?"

"I should not. I think we should suit: and what third person is there whose presence would not spoil our pleasure?"

"Indeed, I know of none about our own ages—no lady at least, and as to gentlemen——"

"An excursion becomes quite a different thing when there are gentlemen of the party," interrupted Caroline.

"I agree with you—quite a different thing to what we were proposing."

"We were going simply to see the old trees, the old ruins; to pass a day in old times, surrounded by olden silence, and above all by quietude."

"You are right; and the presence of gentlemen dispels the last charm, I think. If they are of the wrong sort, like your Malones, and your young Sykes, and Wynnes, irritation takes the place of serenity. If they are of the right sort, there is still a change—I can hardly tell what change, one easy to feel, difficult to describe."

"We forget Nature, *imprimis*."

"And then Nature forgets us; covers her vast calm brow with a dim veil, conceals her face, and withdraws the peaceful joy with which, if we had been content to worship her only, she would have filled our hearts."

In spite of its uncanniness and grewsome incidents, there is a power in the *Wuthering*

Heights of Emily Brontë and no less in the peculiar *Agnes Grey* of Anne Brontë that shows genius in the family was not confined to the elder sister, while Bramwell's ill-starred career gives evidences that in him too were sparks of the divine fire. Taken as a whole, it was a most extraordinary family, one unequaled in literature. What those delicate, consumptive children might have accomplished under favorable conditions will never be known, but, as it is, their history has all the interest of tragic fiction, and it has been set forth in undying colors in the magic biography by Mrs. Gaskell, where the intimate personal letters of Charlotte Brontë grip the reader with the intensity of their feeling and the spirit of devotion to her sisters and brother.

IX. MRS. GASKELL. Elizabeth Stevenson, better known to the world by her married name, Mrs. Gaskell (1810-1865), was born in London, but as her mother died in giving her birth, the infant was brought up by her aunt, a Miss Holland, at Knutsford in Cheshire. Elizabeth Stevenson lived a quiet life, grew to womanhood, married the Rev. William Gaskell of Manchester, and became the mother of seven children, six daughters and a son, of whom only one survived childhood. When her little boy died, Mrs. Gaskell was so overwhelmed with grief that her husband suggested writing as a means of quieting her sorrow. The result was *Mary Barton*, a powerful story which dealt with the social conditions in Man-

chester as Mrs. Gaskell saw them. The success of her novel was immediate and generous, and from that time she saw herself a famous writer, but retained her quiet simplicity of manner and her abhorrence of publicity. Though she wrote anonymously, her identity became generally known, and she was forced more or less into public life, became acquainted with Ruskin, Dickens and other famous men of the times, but more especially with Charlotte Brontë. Notwithstanding her success and the honor with which she was held, Mrs. Gaskell tried to keep her private life from the public, requesting that no biography of herself should be written, and succeeded so well that we have little knowledge of the quiet, self-contained, brilliant author of *Cranford*. In the height of her powers, soon after she had purchased for her husband a house called "Holybourne" in Hants, she died suddenly and without warning. Mrs. Gaskell's genius was diffused in too many directions to make the greatest impression upon the public, and she has not been known nor appreciated to the extent that her artistic and charming work deserves. Her short stories are almost faultless, and, while her longer works lack unity and continuity of plot, they are so full of quiet humor, keen observation and genuine pathos expressed in pure and exquisite English that they deserve a much wider reading than they have obtained. Her *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, though somewhat prejudiced and from the severity of its criticisms of some

living people unfortunate for the author, yet ranks among the most remarkable of biographies. A brief extract was given in the preceding section.

Cranford, a series of sketches of life in a little English town, is drawn from personal observation, and it is so full of humor and pathos vividly set forth that it must be regarded as her masterpiece and one of the finest books of the kind in existence. From it we abridge the story of Peter Jenkins:

I have often noticed that almost every one has his own individual small economies—careful habits of saving fractions of pennies in some one peculiar direction—any disturbance of which annoys him more than spending shillings or pounds on some real extravagance. An old gentleman of my acquaintance, who took the intelligence of the failure of a Joint-Stock Bank, in which some of his money was invested, with stoical mildness, worried his family all through a long summer's day because one of them had torn (instead of cutting) out the written leaves of his now useless bank-book; of course, the corresponding pages at the other end came out as well, and this little unnecessary waste of paper (his private economy) chafed him more than all the loss of his money. Envelopes fretted his soul terribly when they first came in; the only way in which he could reconcile himself to such waste of his cherished article was by patiently turning inside out all that were sent to him, and so making them serve again. Even now, though tamed by age, I see him casting wistful glances at his daughters when they send a whole inside of a half-sheet of note paper, with the three lines of acceptance to an invitation, written on only one of the sides. I am not above owning that I have this human weakness myself. String is my foible. My pockets get full of little hanks of it, picked up and twisted to-

gether, ready for uses that never come. I am seriously annoyed if any one cuts the string of a parcel instead of patiently and faithfully undoing it fold by fold. How people can bring themselves to use india-rubber rings, which are a sort of deification of string, as lightly as they do, I cannot imagine. To me an india-rubber ring is a precious treasure. I have one which is not new—one that I picked up off the floor nearly six years ago. I have really tried to use it, but my heart failed me, and I could not commit the extravagance.

Small pieces of butter grieve others. They cannot attend to conversation because of the annoyance occasioned by the habit which some people have of invariably taking more butter than they want. Have you not seen the anxious look (almost mesmeric) which such persons fix on the article? They would feel it a relief if they might bury it out of their sight by popping it into their own mouths and swallowing it down; and they are really made happy if the person on whose plate it lies unused suddenly breaks off a piece of toast (which he does not want at all) and eats up his butter. They think that this is not waste.

Now Miss Matty Jenkyns was chary of candles. We had many devices to use as few as possible. In the winter afternoons she would sit knitting for two or three hours—she could do this in the dark, or by firelight—and when I asked if I might not ring for candles to finish stitching my wristbands, she told me to “keep blind man’s holiday.” They were usually brought in with tea; but we only burnt one at a time. As we lived in constant preparation for a friend who might come in any evening (but who never did), it required some contrivance to keep our two candles of the same length, ready to be lighted, and to look as if we burnt two always. The candles took it in turns; and, whatever we might be talking about or doing, Miss Matty’s eyes were habitually fixed upon the candle, ready to jump up and extinguish it and to light the other before they had become too uneven in length to be restored to equality.

One night, I remember this candle economy particularly annoyed me. I had been very much tired of my compulsory "blind man's holiday," especially as Miss Matty had fallen asleep, and I did not like to stir the fire and run the risk of awakening her; so I could not even sit on the rug, and scorch myself with sewing by fire-light, according to my usual custom. I fancied Miss Matty must be dreaming of her early life; for she spoke one or two words in her uneasy sleep bearing reference to persons who were dead long before. When Martha brought in the lighted candle and tea, Miss Matty started into wakefulness, with a strange, bewildered look around, as if we were not the people she expected to see about her. There was a little sad expression that shadowed her face as she recognized me; but immediately afterwards she tried to give me her usual smile. All through tea-time her talk ran upon the days of her childhood and youth. Perhaps this reminded her of the desirableness of looking over all the old family letters, and destroying such as ought not to be allowed to fall into the hands of strangers; for she had often spoken of the necessity of this task, but had always shrunk from it, with a timid dread of something painful. To-night, however, she rose up after tea and went for them—in the dark; for she piqued herself on the precise neatness of all her chamber arrangements, and used to look uneasily at me when I lighted a bed-candle to go to another room for anything. When she returned there was a faint, pleasant smell of Tonquin beans in the room. I had always noticed this scent about any of the things which had belonged to her mother; and many of the letters were addressed to her—yellow bundles of love-letters, sixty or seventy years old.

Miss Matty undid the packet with a sigh; but she stifled it directly, as if it were hardly right to regret the flight of time, or of life either. We agreed to look them over separately, each taking a different letter out of the same bundle and describing its contents to the other before destroying it. I never knew what sad work the reading of old letters was before that evening, though I could

hardly tell why. The letters were as happy as letters could be—at least those early letters were. There was in them a vivid and intense sense of the present time, which seemed so strong and full, as if it could never pass away, and as if the warm, living hearts that so expressed themselves could never die, and be as nothing to the sunny earth. I should have felt less melancholy, I believe, if the letters had been more so. I saw the tears stealing down the well-worn furrows of Miss Matty's cheeks, and her spectacles often wanted wiping. I trusted at last that she would light the other candle, for my own eyes were rather dim, and I wanted more light to see the pale, faded ink; but no, even through her tears, she saw and remembered her little economical ways.

The letters in question consist of those written by Matty's father, the rector, and his wife and mother-in-law, as well as others from different sources, and in them are found frequent references to Peter, Miss Matty's brother, whose letters from school form a part of the collection. Peter has become a strong, healthy youth with a vast fund of animal spirits. In answer to questions, Matty takes up his story:

"Peter was in high favor with my father, for he worked up well for him. But he seemed to think that the Cranford people might be joked about, and made fun of, and they did not like it; nobody does. He was always hoaxing them; 'hoaxing' is not a pretty word, my dear, and I hope you won't tell your father I used it, for I should not like him to think that I was not choice in my language, after living with such a woman as Deborah. And be sure you never use it yourself. I don't know how it slipped out of my mouth, except it was that I was thinking of poor Peter and it was always his expression. But he was a very gentlemanly boy in many things. He was like dear Captain Brown in al-

ways being ready to help any old person or a child. Still, he did like joking and making fun; and he seemed to think the old ladies in Cranford would believe anything. There were many old ladies living here then; we are principally ladies now, I know, but we are not so old as the ladies used to be when I was a girl. I could laugh to think of some of Peter's jokes. No, my dear, I won't tell you of them, because they might not shock you as they ought to do, and they were very shocking. He even took in my father once, by dressing himself up as a lady that was passing through the town and wished to see the Rector of Cranford, 'who had published that admirable Assize Sermon.' Peter said he was awfully frightened himself when he saw how my father took it all in, and even offered to copy out all his Napoleon Buonaparte sermons for her—him, I mean—no, her, for Peter was a lady then. He told me he was more terrified than he ever was before, all the time my father was speaking. He did not think my father would have believed him; and yet if he had not, it would have been a sad thing for Peter. As it was, he was none so glad of it, for my father kept him hard at work copying out all those twelve Buonaparte sermons for the lady—that was for Peter himself, you know. He was the lady. And once he wanted to go fishing, Peter said, 'Confound the woman!'—very bad language, my dear, but Peter was not always so guarded as he should have been; my father was so angry with him, it nearly frightened me out of my wits: and yet I could hardly keep from laughing at the little curtsies Peter kept making, quite slyly, whenever my father spoke of the lady's excellent taste and sound discrimination."

Miss Matty got up, went to the door, and opened it; no one was there. She rang the bell for Martha, and when Martha came, her mistress told her to go for eggs to a farm at the other end of the town.

"I will lock the door after you, Martha. You are not afraid to go, are you?"

"No, ma'am, not at all; Jem Hearn will be only too proud to go with me."

Miss Matty drew herself up, and as soon as we were alone, she wished that Martha had more maidenly reserve.

"We'll put out the candle, my dear. We can talk just as well by firelight, you know. There! Well, you see, Deborah had gone from home for a fortnight or so; it was a very still, quiet day, I remember, overhead; and the lilacs were all in flower, so I suppose it was spring. My father had gone out to see some sick people in the parish; I recollect seeing him leave the house with his wig and shovel-hat and cane. What possessed our poor Peter I don't know; he had the sweetest temper, and yet he always seemed to like to plague Deborah. She never laughed at his jokes, and thought him ungenteel, and not careful enough about improving his mind; and that vexed him.

"Well! he went to her room, it seems, and dressed himself in her old gown, and shawl, and bonnet; just the things she used to wear in Cranford, and was known by everywhere; and he made the pillow into a little—you are sure you locked the door, my dear, for I should not like any one to hear—into—into a little baby, with white long clothes. It was only, as he told me afterwards, to make something to talk about in the town; he never thought of it as affecting Deborah. And he went and walked up and down in the Filbert walk—just half-hidden by the rails, and half-seen; and he cuddled his pillow, just like a baby, and talked to it all the nonsense people do. Oh, dear! and my father came stepping stately up the street, as he always did; and what should he see but a little black crowd of people—I daresay as many as twenty—all peeping through his garden rails. So he thought, at first, they were only looking at a new rhododendron that was in full bloom, and that he was very proud of; and he walked slower, that they might have more time to admire. And he wondered if he could make out a sermon from the occasion, and thought, perhaps, there was some relation between the rhododendrons and

the lilies of the field. My poor father! when he came nearer, he began to wonder that they did not see him; but their heads were all so close together, peeping and peeping! My father was amongst them, meaning, he said, to ask them to walk into the garden with him, and admire the beautiful vegetable production, when—oh, my dear, I tremble to think of it—he looked through the rails himself, and saw—I don't know what he thought he saw, but old Clare told me his face went quite gray-white with anger, and his eyes blazed out under his frowning black brows; and he spoke out—oh, so terribly!—and bade them all stop where they were—not one of them to go, not one of them to stir a step; and, swift as light, he was in at the garden door, and down the Filbert walk, and seized hold of poor Peter, and tore his clothes off his back—bonnet, shawl, gown, and all—and threw the pillow among the people over the railings: and then he was very, very angry indeed, and before all the people he lifted up his cane and flogged Peter!

“My dear, that boy's trick, on that sunny day, when all seemed going straight and well, broke my mother's heart, and changed my father for life. It did, indeed. Old Clare said, Peter looked as white as my father; and stood as still as a statue to be flogged; and my father struck hard! When my father stopped to take breath, Peter said, ‘Have you done enough, sir?’ quite hoarsely, and still standing quite quiet. I don't know what my father said—or if he said anything. But old Clare said, Peter turned to where the people outside the railing were, and made them a low bow, as grand and as grave as any gentleman; and then walked slowly into the house. I was in the store-room helping my mother to make cowslip wine. I cannot abide the wine now, nor the scent of the flowers; they turn me sick and faint, as they did that day, when Peter came in, looking as haughty as any man—indeed, looking like a man, not like a boy. ‘Mother!’ he said, ‘I am come to say, God bless you forever.’ I saw his lips quiver as he spoke; and I think he durst not say anything more loving, for the purpose that was

in his heart. She looked at him rather frightened, and wondering, and asked him what was to do. He did not smile or speak, but put his arms round her and kissed her as if he did not know how to leave off; and before she could speak again, he was gone. We talked it over, and could not understand it, and she bade me go and seek my father, and ask what it was all about. I found him walking up and down, looking very highly displeased.

“‘Tell your mother I have flogged Peter, and that he richly deserved it.’

“‘I durst not ask any more questions. When I told my mother, she sat down, quite faint, for a minute. I remember, a few days after, I saw the poor, withered cowslip flowers thrown out to the leaf heap, to decay and die there. There was no making of cowslip wine that year at the rectory—nor, indeed, ever after.

“‘Presently my mother went to my father. I know I thought of Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus; for my mother was very pretty and delicate-looking, and my father looked as terrible as King Ahasuerus. Some time after they came out together; and then my mother told me what had happened, and that she was going up to Peter’s room at my father’s desire—though she was not to tell Peter this—to talk the matter over with him. But no Peter was there. We looked over the house; no Peter was there! Even my father, who had not liked to join in the search at first, helped us before long. The rectory was a very old house—steps up into a room, steps down into a room, all through. At first, my mother went calling low and soft, as if to reassure the poor boy, ‘Peter! Peter, dear! it’s only me;’ but, by-and-by, as the servants came back from the errands my father had sent them, in different directions, to find where Peter was—as we found he was not in the garden, nor the hayloft, nor anywhere about—my mother’s cry grew louder and wilder, ‘Peter! Peter, my darling! where are you?’ for then she felt and understood that that long kiss meant some sad kind of ‘good-bye.’ The afternoon went on—my mother never resting, but seeking again and again

in every possible place that had been looked into twenty times before, nay, that she had looked into over and over again herself. My father sat with his head in his hands, not speaking except when his messengers came in, bringing no tidings; then he lifted up his face, so strong and sad, and told them to go again in some new direction. My mother kept passing from room to room, in and out of the house, moving noiselessly, but never ceasing. Neither she nor my father durst leave the house, which was the meeting-place for all the messengers. At last (and it was nearly dark), *my father rose up. He took hold of my mother's arm as she came with wild, sad pace through one door, and quickly towards another. She started at the touch of his hand, for she had forgotten all in the world but Peter.*

"'Molly!' said he, 'I did not think all this would happen.' He looked into her face for comfort—her poor face all wild and white; for neither she nor my father had dared to acknowledge—much less act upon—the terror that was in their hearts, lest Peter should have made away with himself. My father saw no conscious look in his wife's hot, dreary eyes, and he missed the sympathy that she had always been ready to give him—strong man as he was, and at the dumb despair in her face his tears began to flow. But when she saw this, a gentle sorrow came over her countenance, and she said, 'Dearest John! don't cry; come with me, and we'll find him,' almost as cheerfully as if she knew where he was. And she took my father's great hand in her little soft one, and led him along, the tears dropping as he walked on that same unceasing weary walk, from room to room, through house and garden.

"Oh, how I wished for Deborah! I had no time for crying, for now all seemed to depend on me. I wrote for Deborah to come home. I sent a message privately to that same Mr. Holbrook's house—poor Mr. Holbrook;—you know who I mean. I don't mean I sent a message to him, but I sent one that I could trust to know if Peter was at his house. For at one time Mr. Holbrook was an

rounded by friends and a body of natives who venerated him as their great protector. The outbreak of war among the Samoans was a great shock to him, for he loved them as though they were children. In the winter of 1894, while chatting with his wife on the veranda of his home, he was suddenly stricken by cerebral apoplexy and passed painlessly away. The next day he was buried by the Samoan chieftains on the summit of Mount Vaea, on the spot which he had chosen for his tomb. Among his papers there was found after his death a note in his own handwriting, which read as follows: "*Desiderata*: I. Good Health; II. Two to Three Hundred a Year; III. O, du Lieber Gott, *friends!* AMEN."

Among his books not already mentioned, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Kidnapped* are two noted novels, which with the others are sufficient to preserve his reputation. After his death, his *Vailima Letters* were published, and from them we extract an address delivered to the chiefs on the opening of the "Road of Gratitude" in 1894:

I will tell you, chiefs, that when I saw you working on that road, my heart grew warm; not with gratitude only, but with hope. It seemed to me that I read the promise of something good for Samoa; it seemed to me, as I looked at you, that you were a company of warriors in a battle, fighting for the defense of our common country against all aggression. For there is a time to fight, and a time to dig. You Samoans may fight, you may conquer twenty times and thirty times, and all will be in vain. There is but one way to defend Samoa. Hear

it before it is too late. It is to make roads, and gardens, and care for your trees, and sell their produce wisely, and, in one word, to occupy and use your country. If you do not, others will. . . . What are you doing with your talent, Samoa? Your three talents, Savaii, Upolu, and Tutuila? Have you buried it in a napkin? Not Upolu at least. You have rather given it out to be trodden under feet of swine: and the swine cut down food trees and burn houses, according to the nature of swine, or of that much worse animal, foolish man, acting according to his folly. "Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed." But God has both sown and strawed for you here in Samoa; He has given you a rich soil, a splendid sun, copious rain, all is ready to your hand, half done. And I repeat to you that thing which is sure: if you do not occupy and use your country, others will. It will not continue to be yours or your children's, if you occupy it for nothing. You and your children will in that case be cast out into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for that is the law of God which passeth not away. I who speak to you have seen these things. I have seen them with my eyes—these judgments of God. I have seen them in Ireland, and I have seen them in the mountains of my own country—Scotland—and my heart was sad. These were a fine people in the past—brave, gay, faithful and very much like Samoans, except in one particular, that they were much wiser and better at that business of fighting of which you think so much. But the time came to them as it now comes to you, and it did not find them ready. The messenger came into their villages and they did not know him; they were told, as you are told, to use and occupy their country, and they would not hear. And now you may go through great tracts of the land and scarce meet a man or a smoking house, and see nothing but sheep feeding. The other people that I tell you of have come upon them like a foe in the night, and these are the other people's sheep who browse upon the foundation of their houses. To come

nearer; and I have seen this judgment in Oahu also. I have ridden there the whole day along the coast of an island. Hour after hour went by and I saw the face of no living man except that of the guide who rode with me. All along that desolate coast, in one bay after another, we saw, still standing, the churches that have been built by the Hawaiians of old. There must have been many hundreds, many thousands, dwelling there in old times, and worshipping God in these now empty churches. For to-day they were empty; the doors were closed, the villages had disappeared, the people were dead and gone; only the church stood on like a tombstone over a grave, in the midst of the white men's sugar fields. The other people had come and used that country, and the Hawaiians who occupied it for nothing had been swept away, "where is weeping and gnashing of teeth."

I do not speak of this lightly, because I love Samoa and her people. I love the land, I have chosen it to be my home while I live, and my grave after I am dead; and I love the people, and have chosen them to be my people to live and die with. And I see that the day is come now of the great battle; of the great and the last opportunity by which it shall be decided, whether you are to pass away like these other races of which I have been speaking, or to stand fast and have your children living on and honoring your memory in the land you received of your fathers.

The Land Commission and the Chief Justice will soon have ended their labors. Much of your land will be restored to you to do what you can with. Now is the time the messenger is come into your villages to summon you; the man is come with the measuring rod; the fire is lighted in which you shall be tried; whether you are gold or dross. Now is the time for the true champions of Samoa to stand forth. And who is the true champion of Samoa? It is not the man who blackens his face, and cuts down trees, and kills pigs and wounded men. It is the man who makes roads, who plants food trees, who gathers harvests, and is a profitable servant before the

Lord, using and improving that great talent that has been given him in trust. That is the brave soldier; that is the true champion; because all things in a country hang together like the links of the anchor cable, one by another: but the anchor itself is industry.

There is a friend of most of us, who is far away; not to be forgotten where I am, where Tupuola is, where Poè Lelei, Mataafa, Solevao, Poè Teleso, Tupuola Lotofaga, Tupuola Amaile, Muliaiga, Ifopa, Fatialoga, Lemusu are. He knew what I am telling you; no man better. He saw the day was come when Samoa had to walk a new path, and to be defended, not only with guns and blackened faces, and the noise of men shouting, but by digging and planting, reaping and sowing. When he was still here amongst us, he busied himself planting cacao; he was anxious and eager about agriculture and commerce and spoke and wrote continuously; so that when we turn our minds to the same matters, we may tell ourselves that we are still obeying Mataafa. *Ua tautala mai pea o ia ua mamao.*

I know that I do not speak to idle or foolish hearers. I speak to those who are not too proud to work for gratitude. Chiefs! You have worked for Tusitala, and he thanks you from his heart. In this, I wish you could be an example to all Samoa—I wish every chief in these islands would turn to, and work, and build roads, and sow fields, and plant food trees, and educate his children and improve his talents—not for love of Tusitala, but for the love of his brothers, and his children, and the whole body of generations yet unborn.

Chiefs! On this road that you have made many feet shall follow. The Romans were the bravest and greatest of people! Mighty men of their hands, glorious fighters and conquerors. To this day in Europe you may go through parts of the country where all is marsh and bush, and perhaps after struggling through a thicket, you shall come forth upon an ancient road, solid and useful as the day it was made. You shall see men and women bearing their burdens along that even way, and

you may tell yourself that it was built for them perhaps fifteen hundred years before—perhaps before the coming of Christ—by the Romans. And the people still remember and bless them for that convenience, and say to one another, that as the Romans were the bravest men to fight, so they were the best at building roads.

Chiefs! Our road is not built to last a thousand years, yet in a sense it is. When a road is once built, it is a strange thing how it collects traffic, how every year as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon, and others are raised up to repair and perpetuate it, and keep it alive; so that perhaps even this road of ours may, from reparation to reparation, continue to exist and be useful hundreds and hundreds of years after we are mingled in the dust. And it is my hope that our far-away descendants may remember and bless those who labored for them to-day.

XI. OTHER VICTORIAN NOVELISTS. The Victorian Era was, more than anything else, if productivity be considered, an age of novelists, but, besides those to whom we have given some special attention, there are at least a dozen others who deserve more than passing notice. While some of them have written but little, others have written voluminously; while some have produced but one book of national popularity, others have written many which have entertained thousands of readers. It is utterly impossible to give them the space they might be considered to deserve, but a brief résumé of their writings may be helpful to those who wish to read and be entertained, if not always instructed.

We shall consider them chronologically, in the order of their birth.

1. *Frederick Marryat* (1792–1848), a captain in the English navy, after his retirement from active service gave himself up to novel-writing and produced a number of stories based more or less upon his personal experience, that, full of life, humor and stirring narrative have given entertainment to many youthful and not a few elderly readers. Among the best of his somewhat long list are *Peter Simple* and *Midshipman Easy*.

2. *Samuel Lover* (1797–1868) was an Irish novelist who also wrote many songs and several plays. The farcical *Handy Andy* is his principal novel, and while most of his others are forgotten, the amusing adventures of Andy are still enjoyed by many boys.

3. *George Borrow* (1803–1881) was one of the singular characters of his time. Much of an adventurer, a pedantic scholar, with a passion for gypsies and low-bred people, he produced a series of works, largely autobiographical, in which fact and fiction are curiously blended. Though lacking in unity and full of tedious passages, there are such quaint and curious imaginative stories woven into his life with the gypsies that *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye* are unique productions which, if properly edited, would charm and delight every modern reader, as is evidenced by the fact that one popular present-day novelist has borrowed whole scenes without acknowledgment from the elder writer, and thereby made one of the “best-sellers.”

4. *Edward Bulwer*, the first Baron Lytton (1803–1873), was a man of great versatility who became a prominent statesman and was eminently successful both as a novelist and playwright. Of his novels, *The Last Days of Pompeii* is still extremely popular, and, like most of his other really successful novels, is richly historical. *Rienzi* and *The Last of the Barons* might be mentioned in the same connection. Among his plays *The Lady of Lyons* and *Richelieu* are still occasionally revived, and both present dramatic scenes and not a little rhetorical conversation.

5. *Benjamin Disraeli*, Earl of Beaconsfield (1804–1881), was one of England's prominent statesmen as well as a prolific novelist, though few of his productions are read at the present time, their stilted mannerisms and general heaviness tending to discourage those who might otherwise be pleased with the narrative and instructed with the thought they contain. *Vivian Grey*, his first novel, *Coningsby* and *Lothair* are among the best.

6. *William Harrison Ainsworth* (1805–1882) was the son of a Manchester lawyer, who devoted the greater part of his life to journalism and literature and in the latter field produced about forty historical novels characterized by a wealth of incident which, however, is not always pleasant. *The Tower of London* and *Old St. Paul's* are among his best.

7. *Charles James Lever* (1806–1872) was remarkably successful with his *Harry Lorrequer*,

Charles O'Malley and a number of other Irish stories, all devoid of well-organized plot but highly amusing and full of spirited stories that entertain the reader as he wanders through the tales.

8. *Charles Reade* (1814–1884) was a novelist and dramatist of very considerable power. Such novels as *Peg Woffington* and *It is Never Too Late to Mend* will always prove fascinating to a great many readers, while *The Cloister and the Hearth* is really one of the great historical novels, containing as it does on its vast canvas a magnificent survey of Holland, Germany, France and Italy at the end of the fifteenth century. With a beautiful love story interwoven in a dashing tale of adventure, it is a fascinating book, sufficient to make the reputation of any man.

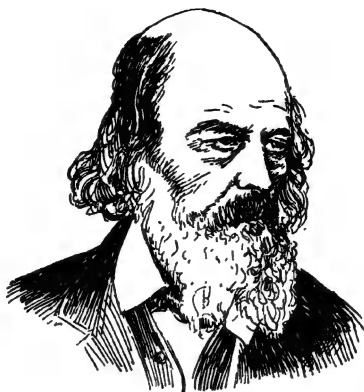
9. *Anthony Trollope* (1815–1882) was the most prolific of a literary family and one who wrote a series of books which picture the life of the English provincial classes with remarkable truthfulness and in an extremely interesting manner. Those novels relating to Barsetshire contain his best work, beginning with *The Warden*, including *Barchester Towers*, his most widely read novel, and ending with *The Last Chronicle of Barset*.

10. *Charles Kingsley* (1819–1875), canon of Westminster, is better known by his novels than by his work in the pulpit. Whatever subject he undertook he touched it skillfully, and some of his tales are wrought out with marvel-

ous accuracy. Chief among them all is *Hypatia*, in which the character of Miriam is his greatest creation, but in *Alton Locke* he has drawn as vivid pictures of wretched hovels and in *Westward Ho* of the South American forest as in *Hypatia* he did of the desert. *Westward Ho* and *Hereward the Wake* are great stories for the young, while *Hypatia* furnishes plenty of thought-material for more adult readers.

11. *William Wilkie Collins* (1824–1889) possessed a marvelous power of weaving and unraveling the most intricate plots made fascinating by dramatic, or rather, melodramatic, incidents that hold the attention of the reader from start to finish. Some of the novels have been successfully dramatized, but something seems lost in every attempt. *The Woman in White*, *No Name* and *The Moonstone*, a thrilling detective tale, are those which will furnish the most entertainment.

12. *Mrs. Craik*, better known to the reading world as Miss Mulock (Dinah Maria Mulock) (1826–1887), is famous for her novel *John Halifax, Gentleman*, which appeared in 1857 and became immediately popular not only in England but by translation in most other European countries. It is an interesting tale, presenting a moral lesson in an attractive way, and though apparently in danger of being forgotten it was in the latter part of the nineteenth century one of the most influential novels.



CHAPTER XXX

THE VICTORIAN AGE (CONCLUDED)

POETRY

THE GREAT TRIO. As we associate Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge in one group and Byron, Shelley and Keats in another, so do we unconsciously make of Tennyson and the two Brownings a third trio, for though in detail they are widely different, they have many points in common, and they lived and flourished in the same era. Unlike their immediate predecessors, the Byron group, the Victorian trio enjoyed a long period of popularity, extending in the case of the two men to upwards of half a century. The oldest, Elizabeth Barrett, was born but six years before Robert Browning, the youngest, but she died twenty-eight years before her husband, who

was survived by Tennyson for three years. Mrs. Browning was only fifty-five when she died, Robert Browning seventy-seven, and Tennyson eighty-three. Elizabeth Barrett's first book was published in 1825, Tennyson's in 1826, but Browning's not till 1833, while the books which established the reputation of each were published between the years 1842 and 1846. These three poets, then, gave character to the Victorian Age, and since them their equals have not appeared. In their earlier years all were accused of faults which have been generally acknowledged, and in later times of peculiarities which only genius could compel the world to forgive. All this, however, we shall the better appreciate as we consider them individually.

II. TENNYSON. There is as little of interesting incident in the life of Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), the most popular of modern English poets, as in the lives of most modern writers. Quiet and uneventful is the existence of scholars, and in Tennyson's case there appears but one great event to influence his genius, and that was the death of his cherished friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, son of the historian, a young man of great promise and irreproachable character.

Born at Somersby, Alfred was the fourth son of the rector, a wise and gentle man, who directed the education of his sons in an intelligent and sympathetic manner. Life was pleasant for the young genius, both in the rec-

tory and the village school, and the charming surroundings helped to give the growing boy a love for nature that never deserted him. When Alfred was eighteen he and his brother Charles published *Poems by Two Brothers*, to which the brother Frederick had contributed a few minor pieces. Early the next year the two entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where in his second year Alfred won a gold medal for his poem bearing the unpromising title of *Timbuctoo*. Soon he was the center of a group of brilliant friends, among whom were Monckton Milnes, Kemble, Arthur Hallam, Merrivale and others whose talents made them conspicuous in university life. *Poems Chiefly Lyrical* was published in Tennyson's third year at Trinity, and at intervals other small volumes, but it was not, as we have intimated, until 1842 that a collection of the best of his earlier poems and a number of new pieces changed his slowly growing popularity into certain success. For the ten years following the death of Hallam, he had been silent, but from the appearance of his new book his activity increased, and the great bulk of his finest work was done thereafter. As late as 1845, however, he had received little pecuniary reward for his labors, and in that year his friends secured for him a small pension, which enabled him to live economically. *The Princess* proved more profitable, and the receipts from *In Memoriam* enabled him to end his long engagement and marry Emily Sellwood in 1850. Of this event he reverently

said, "The peace of God came into my life when I married her," and their happy and contented existence justified the remark. On the death of Wordsworth, Tennyson was appointed poet laureate, and he held the position without cavil from the public for forty-two years. About this time, Carlyle, writing to Emerson, says:

A true human soul, or some authentic approximation thereto, to whom your own soul can say, Brother.—A man solitary and sad, as certain men are, dwelling in an element of gloom. One of the finest looking men in the world. A great shock of rough, dusty dark hair; bright, laughing, hazel eyes; massive aquiline face, most massive, yet most delicate; of sallow brown complexion, almost Indian-looking; clothes cynically loose, free and easy; smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical metallic,—fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between; speech and speculation free and plenteous: I do not meet in these last decades such company over a pipe. We shall see what he will grow to.

Tennyson's health was never robust, and during his latter years one illness followed another, though he did not publish his last volume of verses until 1889 and his last play until the year of his death. In 1884 Queen Victoria raised him to the peerage as Baron Tennyson. He lived at his beautiful home at Farringford in the Isle of Wight, or at Aldworth, another house he owned in Sussex, where he died in October, 1892. His interment was in Westminster Abbey, as his son says, "next to Robert Browning and in front of the Chaucer monument; and for weeks after the funeral multi-

tudes passed by the grave in never-ending procession." Stopford Brooke has said: "The death of Tennyson was worthy of his life, and yet with a conscious stateliness which was all his own; and these two, simplicity and stateliness, were also vital in the texture of his poetry."

III. "IN MEMORIAM." Not only were Hallam and Tennyson intimate personal friends, but the families were intimate and the former was engaged to marry the latter's sister. When Hallam was twenty-two years of age he went abroad for his health, his father accompanying him. At Vienna he caught a slight cold, which brought on an attack of intermittent fever that did not appear to be alarming, but a sudden congestion of the brain set in, and the young man died very suddenly. His body was brought back to England and buried at Clevedon church.

In Memoriam is a series of lyrics of uniform meter, all dealing with different phases of the poet's grief for his friend, and together making the noblest elegy in the language. The poems were written at different times and were gathered together and published in 1850.

This elegy was not at first received everywhere with approval, but it has gradually established itself as Tennyson's masterpiece and is now generally recognized as of surpassing power. As a type of the unfavorable criticism with which the work was met, this is offered from Charlotte Brontë:

I have read Tennyson's *In Memoriam* or, rather, part of it; I closed the book when I had got about half way. It is beautiful, it is mournful, it is monotonous. Many of the feelings expressed bear in their utterance the stamp of truth; yet if Arthur Hallam had been somewhat nearer Tennyson—his brother instead of his friend—I should have distrusted this measured and printed movement of grief.

Another, in a different vein, is from the pen of H. A. Taine:

His long poem *In Memoriam*, written in praise and memory of a friend who died young, is cold, monotonous, and too prettily arranged. He goes into mourning, but like a correct gentleman, with brand-new gloves, wipes away his tears with a cambric handkerchief, and displays throughout the religious service which ends the ceremony, all the compunction of a respectful and well-trained layman.

On the other hand here are opinions that do away with the superficial criticisms just quoted and demonstrate the strong qualities of the production, its lyric beauty, its idealization of love, its moral grandeur. George MacDonald writes:

His friend is nowhere in his sight, and God is silent. Death, God's final compulsion to prayer, in its dread, its gloom, its utter stillness, its apparent nothingness, urges the cry. Moanings over the dead are mingled with the profoundest questionings of philosophy, the signs of nature, and the story of Jesus, while now and then the star of the morning, bright Phosphor, flashes a few rays through the shifting, cloudy darkness. And if the sun has not arisen on the close of the book, yet the aurora of the coming dawn gives light enough to make the onward journey possible and hopeful.

E. C. Stedman has said :

At the age of forty a man blessed with a sound mind in a sound body should reach the maturity of his intellectual power. At such a period Tennyson produced *In Memoriam*, his most characteristic and significant work. In it are concentrated his wisest reflections upon life, death, and immortality, the worlds within and without; while the whole song is so largely uttered, and so pervaded with the singer's manner that any isolated line is recognized at once. This work stands by itself; none can essay another upon its model without yielding every claim to personality, and at the risk of inferiority that would be appalling.

The strength of Tennyson's intellect has full sweep in this elegiac poem—the great threnody of our language, by virtue of unique conception and power. *Lycidas*, with its primrose beauty and varied lofty flights is but the extension of a theme set by Moschus and Bion. Shelley, in *Adonais*, despite his spiritual ecstasy and splendor of lament, followed the same masters—yes, and took his landscape and imagery from distant climes. Swinburne's dirge for Baudelaire is a wonder of melody; nor do we forget the *Thyrsis* of Arnold, and other modern adventures in a direction where the sweet and absolute solemnity of the Saxon tongue is most apparent. Still, as an original and intellectual production, *In Memoriam* is beyond them all and a more important though possibly no more enduring creation of rhythmic art. The metrical form of this work deserves attention. The author's choice of transposed quatrain verse was a piece of good fortune. Its hymnal quality, finely exemplified in the opening prayer, is always impressive, and although a monotone, no more monotonous than the sounds of nature—the murmur of the ocean, the sighing of the mountain pines. Were *In Memoriam* written in direct quatrains, I think the effect would be unendurable. The work as a whole is built up of successive lyrics, each expressing a single phase of the poet's sorrow-brooding thought; and

here again is followed the method of nature, which evolves cell after cell, and joining each to each constructs the sentient organization. But Tennyson's art instincts are always perfect; he does the fitting thing, and rarely seeks, through eccentric and curious movements, to attract the popular regard. As to scenery, imagery, and general treatment, *In Memoriam* is eminently a British poem. The grave, majestic, hymnal measure swells like the peal of an organ, yet acts as a brake on undue spasmodic outbursts of discordant grief.

Peter Bayne's opinion is as follows:

The greatest poem, all things considered, that Tennyson ever wrote is *In Memoriam*. Its name indicates one of the most difficult efforts which can be made in Literature. It aims at embalming a private sorrow for everlasting remembrance, at rendering a personal grief generally and immortally interesting. The set eye, the marble brow of stoicism would cast back human sympathy; the broken accents and convulsive weeping of individual affliction would awaken no nobler emotion than mere pity; it was sorrow in a calm and stately attitude, robed in angel-like beauty, though retaining a look of earnest, endless sadness that would draw generation after generation to the house of mourning. No poet save one possessed not only of commanding genius, but of peculiar qualifications for the task, could have attempted to delineate a sorrow like this. The genius of Tennyson found in the work its precise and most congenial employment; and the result is surely *the finest elegiac poem in the world*.

In Memoriam is too long to be printed entire, and it is doubtful if a series of extracts would convey a comprehensive idea of the poem. The fundamental thought has been defined thus: “Man's true happiness consists in the perfect conformity of his will to the divine will, and

this conformity is attained through love, first of man and then of God."

The invocation, which serves as an introduction and prologue, was not written until 1849, and so may be considered as a summing up, a conclusion to the whole long series of more or less independent lyrics:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we can not prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we can not know:
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
 But more of reverence in us dwell:
 That mind and soul, according well,
 May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
 We mock thee when we do not fear:
 But help thy foolish ones to bear;
 Help thy vain words to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me;
 What seemed my worth since I began;
 For merit lives from man to man,
 And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
 Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
 I trust he lives in thee, and there
 I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
 Confusions of a wasted youth;
 Forgive them where they fail in truth,
 And in thy wisdom make me wise.

The first stanza of the first lyric is familiar
 to all:

I held it truth, with him who sings
 To one clear harp in divers tones,
 That men may rise on stepping-stones
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

We have space for but one more lyric, the
 well-known Christmas song:

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night:
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

• Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

IV. "IDYLLS OF THE KING." Once more the Arthurian cycle of romances was to come into view, and this time through the medium of a

poet's mind. Milton and Dryden had both thought of the poetic capabilities of the legends, but it remained for Tennyson to realize them, and this he did in those matchless tales which make up the *Idylls of the King*. They are introduced by the following dedication:

These to His Memory—since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
“Who revered his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it;
Who loved one only and who clave to her—”
Her—over all whose realms to their last isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost him: he is gone:
We know him now: all narrow jealousies
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly;
Not swaying to this faction or to that;
Not making his high place the lawless perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground
For pleasure; but thro' all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life,
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot: for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than his?

Or how should England dreaming of *his* sons
Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor—
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day—
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed,
Beyond all titles, and a household name,
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all Thy daughters cherish Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again!

Then follow in order *The Coming of Arthur*, *Geraint and Enid*, *Merlin and Vivien*, *Lancelot and Elaine*, *Guinevere*, *The Holy Grail*, *Pelleas and Ettarre* and *The Passing of Arthur*. Though these delightful idylls are evidence enough that the Arthurian romances deeply impressed Tennyson, yet his mind had recurred to them at other times, as we may see in the two or three poems on related subjects to be found elsewhere among his writings. He

did not rely entirely upon any one of the old-time narrators, but drew upon his own vivid imagination for incidents and details and embroidered all with beauties of expression that only he knew how to write. It may be interesting to compare Malory's account of the fate of the famous sword Excalibur with that of Tennyson. It will be remembered that when Arthur was dying, Sir Bedivere took the sword and threw it into the lake. Thus briefly Malory tells the incident:

And then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and a hand above the water, and met it and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished. And then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water.

The preparation for Arthur's departure is simple and touching:

“Now put me into the barge,” said the King; and so he did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning, and so they set him down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head and then that Queen said, “Oh, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me?”

In his *Morte d' Arthur*, Tennyson takes the same incidents and clothes them as follows:

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere,
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen ?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
"Sir, King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
"My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm ;
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words ;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, “Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late and I shall die.”

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him as he based
His feet on juts of slipping crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in the waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, “Place me in the barge.”
So to the barge they came. There those three queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose, the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

V. TENNYSON'S DRAMAS AND LONGER POEMS.
Among the longer poems of Tennyson, the most popular have been *The Princess*, *Maud* and *Enoch Arden*, all of which are still read with deep interest. While his dramas are beautifully written, and *Harold* and *Queen Mary* obtained some popularity, most of them have not been successfully produced on the stage, though *Becket* was acted in 1893 at the Lyceum Theater by Sir Henry Irving, who continued to use it as a medium for his genius until near the time of his death.

The familiar story of *Enoch Arden* scarcely needs repetition. It will be remembered that after his marriage to Annie Lee, he is shipwrecked and lost to every one for many years. In the meantime, after long persuasion, Annie yielded to Philip, Enoch's youthful rival, and married him. When at last Enoch returned as from death, he learned what had happened. The scene in which he decided upon his course



From Statue, London

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON
1809-1892

of action is given below, as an example of Tennyson's favorite narrative style, his command of pathos and his dramatic power:

But Enoch yearned to see her face again;
 "If I might look on her sweet face again
 And know that she is happy." So the thought
 Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth,
 At evening when the dull November day
 Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.
 There he sat down gazing on all below;
 There did a thousand memories roll upon him,
 Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures
 The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
 Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,
 The latest house to landlord; but behind,
 With one small gate that open'd on the waste,
 Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:
 And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
 A yewtree, and all around it ran a walk
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it:
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole
 Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence
 That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs
 Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board
 Sparkled and shone; so genial was the hearth:
 And on the right hand of the hearth he saw
 Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
 Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees;
 And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,

Fair-hair'd and tall; and from her lifted hand
Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,
Caught at, and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd:
And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
The mother glancing often toward her babe,
But turning now and then to speak with him,
Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,
And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life beheld
His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe
Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,
And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,
And his own children tall and beautiful,
And him, that other, reigning in his place,
Lord of his rights and of his children's love,—
Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him all,
Because things seen are mightier than things heard,
Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd
To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,
Would shatter all the happiness of the hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,
And feeling all along the garden wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,
Crept to the gate, and opened it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees
Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd.

“Too hard to bear! why did they take me thence?
O God Almighty, blessed Savior, Thou
That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,

Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her peace.
My children too! must I not speak to these?
They know me not. I should betray myself.
Never: no father's kiss for me—the girl
So like her mother, and the boy, my son."

There speech and thought and nature fail'd a little
And he lay tranced; but when he rose and paced
Back toward his solitary home again,
All down the long and narrow street he went
Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
"Not to tell her, never to let her know."

VI. TENNYSON'S LYRICS. From among the great number of Tennyson's exquisite lyrics we can select a few only, but these may be considered as fairly representative of his art. The following stanzas on friendship, *Break, Break, Break*, were published in 1853, and are interesting from their similarity in ideas to those of some parts of *In Memoriam*:

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;

But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Embodied in *The Princess* are six beautiful lyrics which we cannot forbear to quote, as they are among the finest Tennyson ever wrote. The first, on *Reconciliation*, has a note of pathos hard to equal:

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
• There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

The third canto of *The Princess* begins with this most musical lullaby, *Sweet and Low*:

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea !
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me ;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon ;

Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon ;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
 Under the silver moon :
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

The Splendor Falls on Castle Walls, with which the fourth canto begins, is said to have been suggested to the poet by the music of a boatman's bugle on Lake Killarney :

The splendor falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river :
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
 And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

In the fourth canto, a maid "smote her harp and sang" *Tears, Idle Tears* :

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,

In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Another lyric, *Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead*, is placed at the beginning of the sixth canto:

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face,
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
“Sweet my child, I live for thee.”

The seventh and last division begins with the lyric, *Ask Me No More*:

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

One of Tennyson's nature poems, *The Brook*, is a great favorite, both on account of its pretty interpretation of a natural phenomenon and the appropriate music of its lines:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

To close this inadequate group of selections from so prolific a subject as Tennyson, we use a little poem, the heart-felt expression of universal sentiment, which Tennyson wrote late in a life into which sorrow had come and in which faith had followed doubt. In *Crossing the Bar* he states his hope and faith:

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me.
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark.
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark:

For though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

VII. ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING. Elizabeth Barrett was born in Carlton Hall, Durham, in 1806, but the greater part of her life was spent in Herefordshire at a place called Hopesend. Living always under the shadow of consumption and suffering much from family bereavements, her career is remarkable, for by 1846 she had earned a popularity which far excelled that of the rising young poet, Robert Browning, whom, much against the wishes of her family, she married that year. Her home had been the luxurious one of a wealthy merchant, who had carefully assisted her growing genius. In *Aurora Leigh* she gives us a picture of her childhood, showing how, in spite of her fragile health, she amassed the great learning for which she was famous:

Books, books, books!

I had found the secret of a garret-room
Piled high with cases in my father's name;
Piled high, packed large—where, creeping in and out
Among the giant fossils of my past,
Like some small, nimble mouse between the ribs
Of a mastodon, I nibbled here and there
At this or that box, pulling through the gap,
In heats of terror, haste, victorious joy,
The first book first. And how I felt it beat
Under my pillow, in the morning's dark,
An hour before the sun would let me read!
My books!



Photo Ewing Galloway

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING
1806-1861

In spite of ill health she worked incessantly and arduously, but in 1837 suffered the rupture of a blood-vessel in her lungs and was taken by her brother to Torquay, a seaside resort, where it was hoped the milder climate would restore her health. She calls this her "enforced exile to Torquay, with prophecy in the fear and grief and reluctance of it—a dreadful dream of an exile, which gave a nightmare to my life for ever, and robbed it of more than I can speak of here." She also alludes to the accidental drowning of a brother who went out to sail with two friends, no one of whom was seen again.

In *Lady Geraldine's Courtship* she referred in complimentary terms to Robert Browning, who called to express his satisfaction and was shown to her sick-room. From this first visit grew the many which ripened their mutual admiration into love and a marriage which proved very happy and which she never repented, though her father refused to be reconciled. Her health, too, improved after her marriage, for the poets made their home in Italy, spending the summers in the Casa Guidi, Florence, and their winters in Rome. In 1861 she died, as she hoped she would, in her own Casa Guidi.

Of her personal appearance, Kate Field, writing from Florence in 1865, says this:

To those who loved Mrs. Browning (and to know her was to love her) she was singularly attractive. Hers was not the beauty of feature; it was the loftier beauty

of expression. Her slight figure seemed hardly large enough to contain the great heart that beat so fervently within and the soul that expanded more and more as one year gave place to another. It was difficult to believe that such a fairy hand could pen such thoughts of ponderous weight, or that such a "still small voice" could utter them with equal force. But it was Mrs. Browning's face upon which one loved to gaze—that face and head which almost lost themselves in the thick curls of her dark brown hair. That jealous hair could not hide the broad, fair forehead, "royal with the birth," as smooth as any girl's and "too large for wreath of modern wont." Her large brown eyes were beautiful, and were, in truth, the windows of her soul. They combined the confidingness of a child with the poet-passion of the heart and intellect; and in gazing into them it was easy to read *why* Mrs. Browning wrote. God's inspiration was her motive power, and in her eyes was the reflection of this higher light.

"I have never seen," says Hilliard, "a human frame which seemed so nearly a transparent veil for a celestial and immortal spirit. She is a soul of fire enclosed in a shell of pearl." So great, so lovely and so lovable a character could not but inspire other pens. Let them continue this sketch for us. Kate Field writes:

Those who have known Casa Guidi as it was could hardly enter the loved rooms now and speak above a whisper. They who have been so favored can never forget the square anteroom, with its great picture and pianoforte at which the boy Browning passed many an hour; the little dining-room covered with tapestry, and where hung medallions of Tennyson, Carlyle, and Robert Browning; the long study filled with plaster casts and studies, which was Mr. Browning's retreat; and, dearest of all, the large drawing-room where *she* always sat.

There was something about this room that seemed to make it a proper and especial haunt for poets. The dark shadows and subdued light gave it a dreamy look, which was enhanced by the tapestry-covered walls and the old pictures of saints that looked out sadly from their carved frames of black wood. Large bookcases constructed of pieces of Florentine carving selected by Mr. Browning were brimming over with wise-looking books; tables were covered with more gayly-bound volumes, the gifts of brother authors. Dante's grave profile, a cast of Keats's face and brow taken after death, a pen-and-ink sketch of Tennyson, the genial face of John Kenyon, Mrs. Browning's good friend and relative, little paintings of the boy Browning, all attracted the eye in turn, and gave rise to a thousand musings. A quaint mirror, easy-chairs and sofas, and a hundred nothings that always add an indescribable charm, were all massed in this room. But the glory of all, and that which sanctified all, was seated in a low arm-chair near the door. A small table strewn with writing-materials, books, and newspapers was always by her side.

The following quotation is from Nathaniel Hawthorne:

He came into the anteroom to greet us, as did his little boy, Robert, whom they all call Pennini for fondness. The latter cognomen is a diminutive of Apennino, which was bestowed upon him at his first advent into the world because he was so very small, there being a statue in Florence of colossal size called Apennino. I never saw such a boy as this before; so slender, fragile and spirit-like—not as if he were actually in ill-health, but as if he had little or nothing to do with human flesh and blood. . . . Mrs. Browning met us at the door of the drawing-room and greeted us most kindly—a pale, small person, scarcely embodied at all; at any rate only substantial enough to put forth her slender fingers to be grasped, and to speak with a shrill, yet sweet, tenuity of voice. Really I do not see how Mr. Browning can suppose that

he has an earthly wife any more than an earthly child; both are of the elfin race, and will flit away from him some day when he least thinks of it.

VIII. MRS. BROWNING'S POETRY. Edmund Clarence Stedman writes of her poetry as follows:

The Victorian era, with its wider range of opportunities for women, has been illumined by the career of the greatest female poet that England has produced—nor only England, but the whole territory of the English language; more than this, the most inspired woman, so far as known, of all who have composed in ancient or modern tongues, or flourished in any land or time.

The Rev. Joseph Cooke pays her this compliment:

Mrs. Browning—Shakespeare's daughter. I think of her as the best symbol of the choicest part of Britain: in her grand Christian connections, her mighty aspirations for progress, her love of the poor, her spiritual tenderness born of Christianity, her mental aggressiveness born of science, her womanliness—I had almost said her manliness—I will say her heroic readiness to follow God, whithersoever he may lead.

But in truth, though she has been called the greatest English poetess, critics find serious defects in her work, the chief of which is her apparent weakness in understanding rhyme sounds, and while the gushing beauty of her longer poems, her wonderful vocabulary and marvelous power of pathos have made her popular with the general reader, she is seen at her best in lyrical work, with its metrical beauties and musical harmonies. Without going

deeply into detail concerning her poetry, for it must be read in its entirety to be appreciated, we must give some attention to a few of her more important works.

IX. THE TWO METRICAL TALES. The place in literature of *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*, which is by far the most popular of her narrative poems, may perhaps be best indicated by the following critical comments from Peter Bayne:

"Cursed," says Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*, "be the social lies that warp us from the living truth;" "cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool." Love, asserting its God-given power and right to make two hearts happy, and to make their love, united in marriage, a fountain of home happiness for many, is in that poem baffled by worldly pride. In *Lady Geraldine's Courtship* the same doctrine of the divine right of love to set its foot on the neck of pride is poetically preached in Mrs. Browning's manner. . . . *Lady Geraldine's Courtship* is steeped in melody—the language, the imagery, the sentiment, the thought all instinct with music, floating and flowing and rippling along in an element of liquid harmony and modulated brilliance.

Aurora Leigh is a long political novel, which Mrs. Browning considered the most mature of her works, the one in which her highest convictions upon life and art have entered. E. C. Stedman speaks of it as follows:

Upon the whole, I think that the chief value and interest of *Aurora Leigh* appertain to its marvelous illustrations of the development, from childhood on, of an aesthetic, imaginative nature. Nowhere in literature is the process of culture, by means of study and passionate ex-

perience, so graphically depicted. It is the metrical and feminine complement to Thackeray's *Pendennis*—a poem that will be rightly appreciated by artists, thinkers, poets, and by them alone.

X. "SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE." The forty-four sonnets published under the foregoing title were written by Miss Barrett during Browning's courtship, but were not shown to him until after their marriage. The title was adopted as a disguise, for they are not translations from the Portuguese. F. G. Kenyon writes: "With the single exception of Rossetti, no modern English poet has written of love with such genius, such beauty and such sincerity, as the two who gave the most beautiful example of it in their own lives."

On the other hand, Stedman characterizes them as follows:

Here, indeed, the singer rose to her height. Here she is absorbed in rapturous utterance, radiant and triumphant with her own joy. The mists have risen and her sight is clear. Her mouthing and affection are forgotten, her lips cease to stammer, the lyrical spirit has full control. The sonnet, artificial in weaker hands, becomes swift with feeling, red with a "veined humanity," the chosen vehicle of a royal woman's vows. Graces, felicities, vigor, glory of speech, here are so crowded as to tread each upon the other's sceptered pall. The first sonnet, equal to any in our tongue, is an overture containing the motive of the canticle—"not Death, but Love" had seized her unaware. The growth of this happiness, her worship of its bringer, her doubts of her own worthiness, are the theme of these poems. She is in a sweet and, to us, pathetic surprise at the delight which at last has fallen to her. Never was man or minstrel so honored as her

“most gracious singer of high poems.” In the tremor of her love she undervalued herself—with all the feebleness of body, it was enough for any man to live within the atmosphere of such a soul! In fine, the *Portuguese Sonnets*, whose title was a screen behind which the singer poured out her full heart, are the most exquisite poetry hitherto written by a woman and of themselves justify us in pronouncing their author the greatest of her sex—on the ground that the highest mission of a female poet is the expression of love, and that no other woman approaching her in genius has essayed the ultimate form of that expression.

From among these beautiful sonnets we select the following as typical, and have given them the numbers of their sequence:

I

I thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
“Guess now who holds thee?”—“Death,” I said. But,
there,
The silver answer rang,—“Not Death, but Love.”

III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart

Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine, the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

IV

Thou hast thy calling to some palace-floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems! where
The dancers will break footing, from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fullness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps—as thou must sing—alone, aloof.

XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore

Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby !
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curved point,—what bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long
Be here contented ? Think. In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Beloved,—where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

XXVII

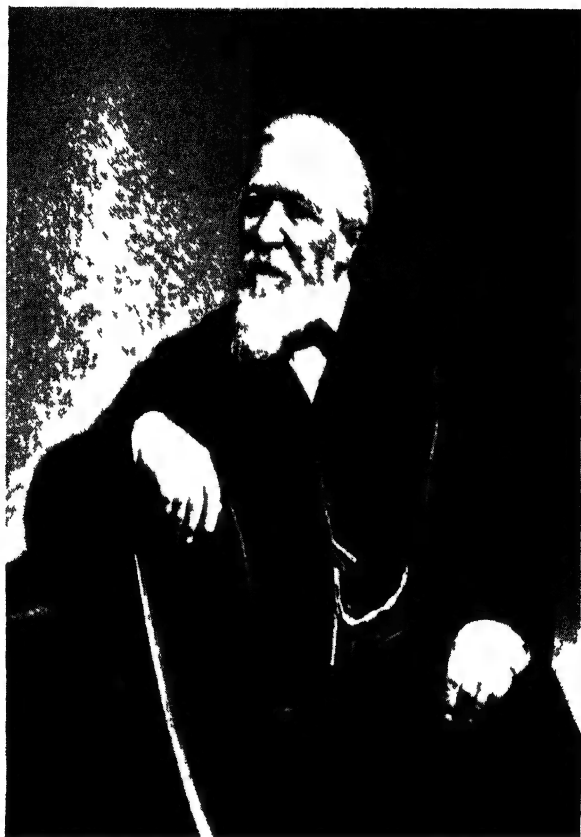
My own beloved, who hast lifted me
From this drear flat of earth where I was thrown,
And in betwixt the languid ringlets, blown
A life-breath, till the forehead hopefully
Shines out again, as all the angels see,
Before thy saving kiss. My own, my own,
Who camest to me when the world was gone,
And I who looked for only God, found thee.
I find thee ; I am safe, and strong, and glad.
As one who stands in dewless asphodel,
Looks backward on the tedious time he had
In the upper-life—so I, with bosom swell,
Make witness, here, between the good and bad,
That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves as well.

XLIII

How do I love thee ? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

XI. ROBERT BROWNING. Second only to Tennyson among the Victorian poets stands Robert Browning, who was born in 1812 in Camberwell, the son of a bank official. Robert was a strong and healthy youth and man and lived an uneventful life, free from its ordinary cares and devoted entirely to music and poetry. The serene monotony of his intellectual life was undisturbed except when sickness or death entered the family. Tennyson beat down all criticism and rose early to popularity, but Browning struggled for nearly forty years against a storm of adverse criticism before finally his worth was recognized. In 1846 he married Elizabeth Barrètt, who was six years his senior and at that time much better known than the poet himself. Always an invalid, Mrs. Browning's life with her husband was nevertheless a charming one, and when in 1861 she died, leaving one son only, the poet left Italy and returned to London, where he was thereafter prominent in social life, though he made fre-



ROBERT BROWNING

1812-1889

quent visits to the continent, where at Venice in December, 1889, he died.

Browning's genius was very productive, and although he spent much time in revising and correcting, he poured forth a flood of poems of nearly every type. Few are easy reading, most of them are difficult, and some entire poems and many passages in others are obscure or unintelligible. This, however, does not mean that he is uninteresting or that what he has written will not repay the reading. The dramatic intensity of some of his scenes, the lyric beauty of many passages and the force and elegance of his figures make the study of his writings absorbing. The casual reader will see little of these charms, for the reading of Browning is an art. He is so peculiar and in many respects so entirely a law unto himself that one must learn a new method of expression before he can fully appreciate his many beauties. To understand his mannerisms is not a difficult matter, but as soon as it is accomplished the reader is confronted with a scholarly intellect whose thought cannot be easily mastered. Browning's methods are psychological, and his analysis of character always deep and penetrating. He looks for the causes of things and traces them to their inevitable consequences. He writes for thinkers, and thinkers read and enjoy him. His really obscure passages come probably from his haste in composition, which, however, is not fast enough to keep pace with the rapidity of his thoughts.

He leaps from one idea to another, and sometimes arrives at conclusions without allowing for the slow steps of his reader's reasoning. These may be grave faults, but they are the faults of a genius it is not for us to criticize. What we must do is to try to rise to the clear heights upon which he stands; then we shall be able to receive his inspiring message.

What this message is let us now take a moment to explain, although in that time one can tell little of it. He would teach us that every single life, no matter how humble, is important in itself; that life means much and that existence here is but a preparation for a fuller, broader life hereafter; that this broader life can be attained only from growth that must proceed from individual effort. In this effort joys and pains must come. In the former we should delight and see in the latter nothing but aids to a nobler existence by conquest. Such is the significance of the battle of joy with sorrow, of good with evil.

XII. "PIPPA PASSES." The human soul is the object of Browning's study. Incident and description are valuable only as they aid in delineating the struggles, the failures, the glorified achievements of the soul. *Pippa Passes* is his most artistic little drama, and in a fascinating way it shows Browning and his philosophy as well as any one poem. At the same time it is not difficult to read. Pippa, a little silk weaver, rises on New Year's Day, her one holiday in all the year, and thinks of the hap-

piest four persons in all her little world. Though she would like to be in turn each one of these, she will not waste her day in sorrowful regret, but will be gay and happy. So she goes forth, singing as she goes. Ottima, whose wealthy husband owns the silk mills, has a handsome lover, Sebald. Pippa would be loved like Ottima and have riches at her command. She does not know that the false Ottima, helped by her base lover, has just slain the old man, her husband, and at this very moment they are talking of the crime. Ottima is trying to revive the love of Sebald, whom the murder has frightened and made remorseful. She is succeeding when Pippa passes by, plucking the flowers, and sends her cheery little song—

. The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;

to the ears of the guilty pair. As she goes on and reaches the words—

God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world,

Sebald sees as by a flash of heaven's own light the sinfulness of his deed. It is the beginning of a saving repentance for both.

Jules, the young sculptor, is also a subject of Pippa's innocent envy. He has just been tricked into marrying a girl below him and is about to cast her aside when Pippa, passing, carols a little love song. The better nature of Jules is aroused and he goes with his bride to begin again among strangers a life of art.

Luigi, the young patriot, is, to Pippa, happy in the care of his doting mother. If she could have the love of such a mother,—but she sings a song of wisdom, of justice and of peace, as she passes the house, and the words confirm Luigi in a patriotic resolve from which his mother had almost persuaded him.

It is night now, and Pippa thinks of the bishop, holiest of all she knows. But this hollow-hearted, scheming bishop grasps at more riches and is threatening a villain who was instrumental in amassing the wealth the bishop now enjoys. In defense the wretched Intendant says that the real heiress of the bishop's wealth was not killed but is now living, the blackeyed Pippa, herself. Together they form a dastardly plot to remove her, but Pippa passes, singing in her innocent loveliness, of the white changing moon, the grass, the trees; the bishop's purpose is turned to one of love.

Pippa, ignorant of the changes she has made in the lives of these four groups of persons, a little tired from her day's pleasuring, unsuspecting of the great things in store for her, goes to her pallet in the attic and innocently wonders how she can ever approach them so as to touch and move them, "do some good or evil to them in some slight way." Finally, she drops asleep with the words of the hymn upon her lips—

All service ranks the same with God—
With God, whose puppets, best and worst,
Are we: there is no last nor first.

XIII. “THE RING AND THE BOOK.” *The Ring and the Book* is Browning’s longest and most ambitious poem. He tells the whole story briefly and quickly at the very beginning, a story of base intrigue, of murder, of punishment. Then the same story is told again at great length from ten different points of view. The half of Rome who sided with the murderer; the other half who favored his murdered wife; the neutral persons who have no sympathy with either; Pompilia on her death bed; the defending counsel; the public prosecutor; the Pope reviewing the case; and Guido in his final confession all go over the story from beginning to end. The new incidents brought in, the new turn given to the incidents already known, the wonderful range and depth of psychological insight shown in keeping these views consistent, the discriminating knowledge of character, the wealth of illustration and the strength and beauty of many passages make the poem of wonderful value to a real student. Of the number of persons met in the complex narrative, four are drawn in a masterful manner, four are vital creations. Count Guido, the most cold-blooded, greedy, scheming villain ever portrayed, shows not a redeeming trait. It is only his tortured and murdered wife who reveals a touch of human sympathy for him:

So he was made; he nowise made himself:
I could not love him, but his mother did.

The frivolous priest, the Canon Caponsacchi, who is roused to manliness by one despairing

appeal from the terror-stricken wife, curbs his love, sacrifices his position in the eyes of many but wins our unstinted admiration. With what nobility he flings himself into the championship of Pompilia and bares his soul to the coarse judges:

I have done with being judged.
I stand guiltless in thought, word and deed,
To the point that I apprise you—in contempt
For all misapprehending ignorance
O' the human heart, much more the mind of Christ,—
That I assuredly did bow, was blessed
By the revelation of Pompilia. There!
Such is the final fact I fling you, Sirs.

But in contemplation of his lonely destiny he can but see what might have been:

To have to do with nothing but the true,
The good, the eternal—and these, not alone
In the main current of the general life,
But small experiences of every day,
Concerns of the particular hearth and home:
To learn not only by a comet's rush,
But a rose's birth—not by the grandeur, God,—
But the comfort, Christ.

“Little Pompilia with the patient brow” is the most impressive character Browning ever drew, the one noble being able to stand with Shakespeare's greatest women. She was but thirteen when called upon to pass through four years of most imminent peril to body and soul, to live in constant terror of her fiendish husband, while she knew and controlled her passionate love and admiration for the noble

priest. Such purity, patience, faith and power of forgiveness, can be the result only of a saintly, spiritual insight. All this Browning brings out with a loving hand that never falters, even in the most delicate situation, when the least weakness in a phrase would destroy the exquisite beauty of his conception.

A few quotations may assist in creating an impression of her. She speaks of her priestly lover, her one friend, her only, all her own:

O lover of my life, O soldier saint,
No work begun shall ever pause for death!
Love will be helpful to me more and more
I' the coming of the course, the new path I must tread—
My weak hand in thy strong hand, strong for that!

She sees and knows through this love the unseen, after death:

Through such souls alone
God stooping shows sufficient of his light
For us i' the dark to rise by. And I rise.

Her love for her babe, in which for the first time she realized God's birth and how He grew likest God in being born, is like the love of Mary:

We poor
Weak souls, how we endeavor to be strong!
I was already using up my life,—
This portion, now, should do him such a good
This other go to keep off such an ill!
The great life; see, a breath and it is gone!
So is detached, so left all by itself
The little life, the fact which means so much.
Shall not God stoop the kindlier to His work,

His marvel of creation, foot would crush,
Now that the hand He trusteth to receive
And hold it, lets the treasure fall perforce?
The better; He shall have in an orphanage
His own way clearer; if my babe
Outlived the hour—and he has lived two weeks—
It is through God who knows I am not by.
Who is it makes the soft gold hair turn black,
And sets the tongue, might lie so long at rest,
Trying to talk? Let us leave God alone!
Why should I doubt He will explain in time
What I feel now, but fail to find the words?
My babe nor was, nor is, nor yet shall be
Count Guido Franceschini's child at all—
Only his mother's, born of love not hate!
So shall I have my rights in after time.
It seems absurd, impossible to-day;
So seems so much else not explained but known!

Guido even in his last terrorized appeal before his execution recognizes her true nature:

Abate,—Cardinal,—Christ,—Maria,—God, . . .
Pompilia, will you let them murder me?

She forgives and pardons him in her farewell thoughts:

We shall not meet in this world nor the next,
But where will God be absent? In His face
Is light, but in His shadow healing too:
Let Guido touch the shadow and be healed!

The fourth of the great characters is the old Pope, reviewing the case alone. He reads the matter rightly, decides justly, and, though grieving that Guido must die, sends the man to execution in the hope that the suddenness of the blow may be the one means for the sal-

vation of the criminal's soul. In one place he says:

Life is probation and the earth no goal
But starting point of man : compel him strive,
Which means in man as good as reach the goal.

Of Browning's other dramas, his lyrics and the dramatic monologues which he handles in so masterly a manner, we have not space to speak. We can but close with his own last lines, which justify the estimate made at the beginning of this brief and inadequate notice:

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to awake.

XIV. BROWNING'S BRIEFER POEMS. Many of Browning's lyrics and the briefer of his narrative poems are clear at once to the average reader, and some few have made themselves very popular among the young; but, as we have said, the greater part of his work requires thought in the perusal, for no one expects more from his readers or assumes in them a greater knowledge than Browning. In the selections which follow we shall try to show the wide range of his subjects and the striking differences in his style, while at the same time we give examples of his work at its best. First, let us read that stirring ballad with its gallop-

ing meter, *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*:

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
“Good speed!” cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew,
“Speed!” echoed the wall to us galloping through.
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace,—
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

’T was a moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokerem, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom a great yellow star came out to see;
At Duffeld ’t was morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-
chime,—
So Joris broke silence with “Yet there is time!”

At Aerschot up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the midst at us galloping past;
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some blind river headland its spray;

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye’s black intelligence,—ever that glance
O’er its white edge at me, his own master, askance;
And the thick heavy spume-flakes, which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upward in galloping on.

By Hasselt Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her;
We'll remember at Aix,"—for one heard the quick
wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering
knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh;
'Neath our feet broke the brittle, bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without peer,—
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or
good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,
As I sate with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from
Ghent.

In *An Incident of the French Camp* we have a perfect little historic epic which embodies a trait of character too noble to be lost:

You know we French stormed Ratisbon:

A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming day.
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,—"
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-gallop: nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect—
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market place,
And you'll be there anon,
To see your flag-bird flap its vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes.
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said :
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

The Lost Leader was suggested by Wordsworth's change from very radical views to an ardent Toryism, but it is interesting to know that later Browning apologized for its great injustice, saying that it was an effusion of hasty youth and was not intended as an exact characterization of the great poet. In a similar vein Whittier wrote his *Ichabod* on the defection of Daniel Webster. Browning's poem follows:

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote ;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed :
How all our copper had gone for his service !
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud.
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die !
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their
graves !
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves !

We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire.
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There will be doubt, hesitation, and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Browning's love for England, in spite of his long residence abroad, is shown in the beautiful lines which he calls *Home Thoughts from Abroad*:

Oh, to be in England now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning,
unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush: he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew

The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon flower!

My Last Duchess, a study in heartless jealousy, is one of Browning's extraordinarily suggestive sketches. The reader must imagine the Duke of Ferrara standing before the portrait of his deceased wife and talking coolly to the messenger from a Count whose daughter the Duke proposes to marry. It is easy for one who understands Italian history to comprehend the meaning of the words: "I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together." The "dramatic monologue" is a favorite style of composition with Browning, and it may be seen to good advantage in *Fra Lippo Lippi* as well as in the following, *My Last Duchess*:

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough

For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad.
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 't was all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgust me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

In conclusion, we quote *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, in which Browning makes the old twelfth century

scholar and traveler the mouthpiece of a profound philosophy:

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half: trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them
all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men:
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-
crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the
throe!

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole;
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and
learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too;
Perfect I call thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou shalt do!"

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh

Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest :
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best !

Let us not always say,
“Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole !”
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, “All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps
soul !”

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term :
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute ; a God though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new :
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby ;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold :
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame :
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know, being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray :
A whisper from the west
Shoots—“Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth : here dies another day.”

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past;
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes

Match me; we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work" must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with
earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

XV. THE ROSSETTIS. Gabriele Rossetti, an Italian artist and poet, became involved in the Napoleonic revolution of 1820, and two years



*From a Painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti,
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

LADY LILITH

ROSSETTI WAS BOTH POET AND PAINTER OF GREAT DISTINCTION.
"LADY LILITH" IS A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF HIS ART

later was compelled to take refuge on an English vessel. After residing in Malta for two years he went to London, and in 1831 was appointed to a post in King's College. In 1845 he became blind, and nine years later he died, leaving three children who have become prominent in English arts and letters.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), the eldest son, was born in London, a wonderfully precocious child, whose education proceeded rapidly in the King's College school, where his father was employed. Rossetti enjoys the distinction of being a great painter as well as a great poet, and is known as the leader of the Victorian romanticists, as well as of the Pre-Raphaelites, in art and literature. In 1860 he married Elizabeth Siddal, whose beauty he has immortalized in the Beatrice of many of his best-known pictures, but two years later she died, and from this shock, combined with severe criticisms upon the morality of his poems, Rossetti never fully recovered; and, having become a victim of the chloral habit, his later years were filled with tragic suffering, though his skill with the brush seems not to have deserted him. When his wife died he buried in her coffin the manuscripts of all his poems, but subsequently at his consent they were disinterred, and in 1870 were published.

Rossetti's poetry has been called "painter's stuff," and its pictorial quality is always evident, but aside from picturesqueness, there is in some of his lyrics a remarkable beauty.

As an example of the pictorial character which we have mentioned, his well-known poem of *The Blessed Damozel* is perhaps the most vivid:

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,

Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?"

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me

That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

“We two,” she said, “will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

“Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

“Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he.”

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
“All this is when he comes.” She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

His most ambitious work is his series of one hundred one sonnets, which he published under the name of *The House of Life*; they were intended to show the mysterious influence of Love, Change and Fate upon man's career. From that source we take the nineteenth sonnet, *Silent Noon*:

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms;
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

The Heart of the Night is the sixty-sixth sonnet:

From child to youth; from youth to arduous man;
From lethargy to fever of the heart;
From faithful life to dream-dowered days apart;
From trust to doubt; from doubt to brink of ban;—
Thus much of change in one swift cycle ran
Till now. Alas, the soul!—how soon must she
Accept her primal immortality,—
The flesh resume its dust whence it began?
O Lord of work and peace! O Lord of life!
O Lord, the awful Lord of will! though late,
Even yet renew this soul with duteous breath:
That when the peace is garnered in from strife,
The work retrieved, the will regenerate,
This soul may see thy face, O Lord of death!

William Michael Rossetti, the second son of Gabriele, achieved distinction as a critic of art and literature, but the fame of the family was more brilliantly enhanced by Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894), second only to E. B. Browning, and indeed superior to her in lyrical beauty and power over rhymes. Miss Rossetti was born in London, exhibited a very marked precocity in poetry, was educated under the care of her mother, and lived a life of devotion and retirement. It is said that an unhappy love affair in her early youth gave to her lyrics that touch of sadness which is so generally recognized. One of her delightful little songs is called *Up Hill*:

“Does the road wind up-hill all the way?”

“Yes, to the very end.”

“Will the day’s journey take the whole long day?”

“From morn to night, my friend.”

“But is there for the night a resting-place?”

“A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.”

"May not the darkness hide it from my face?"

"You cannot miss that inn."

"Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?"

"Those who have gone before."

"Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?"

"They will not keep you standing at that door."

"Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?"

"Of labor you shall find the sum."

"Will there be beds for me and all who seek?"

"Yea, beds for all who come."

It is generally conceded, however, that in *Goblin Market* and the other poems published with it may be found the highest examples of her originality and powerful imagination. The poem which gives title to the book is a fairy tale which Christina's brother William asserted had no "moral apologue incessantly carried out in detail. Still, the incidents are suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them." In reading the poem as a story it should be remembered that mortals, having once tasted the goblin fruits, pine away with longing for them; but in this story Lizzie procures for her sister the much desired second taste, which the goblins always refuse in spite of the most ardent solicitation. Following is the *Goblin Market*:

Morning and evening

Maids heard the goblins cry:

"Come buy our orchard fruits,

Come buy, come buy:

Apples and quinces,

Lemons and oranges,

Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries;—
All ripe together
In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy.”

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes:
Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
“Lie close,” Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head:
“We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what soil they fed
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Their hungry thirsty roots?"
"Come buy," call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.
"Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men."
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook:
"Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds' weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes."
"No," said Lizzie: "No, no, no;
Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us."
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.
One had a cat's face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat's pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry scurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,

Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
"Come buy, come buy."
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother;
Signaling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One heaved the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
"Come buy, come buy," was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money.
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,
The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-paced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried "Pretty Goblin" still for "Pretty Polly;"
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
"Good Folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,

And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather.”
“You have much gold upon your head,”
They answered all together:
“Buy from us with a golden curl.”
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red.
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
She sucked until her lips were sore;
Then flung the emptied rinds away
But gathered up one kernel stone,
And knew not was it night or day
As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate
Full of wise upbraidings:
“Dear, you should not stay so late,
Twilight is not good for maidens;
Should not loiter in the glen
In the haunts of goblin men.
Do you not remember Jeanie,
How she met them in the moonlight,
Took their gifts both choice and many,
Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
Plucked from bowers
Where summer ripens at all hours?
But ever in the moonlight
She pined and pined away;
Sought them by night and day,
Found them no more, but dwindled and grew gray;
Then fell with the first snow,

While to this day no grass will grow
Where she lies low :
I planted daisies there a year ago
That never blow.
You should not loiter so.”
“Nay, hush,” said Laura :
“Nay, hush, my sister :
I ate and ate my fill,
Yet my mouth waters still :
To-morrow night I will
Buy more ;” and kissed her.
“Have done with sorrow ;
I’ll bring you plums to-morrow
Fresh on their mother twigs,
Cherries worth getting ;
You cannot think what figs
My teeth have met in,
What melons icy-cold
Piled on a dish of gold
Too huge for me to hold,
What peaches with a velvet nap,
Pellucid grapes without one seed :
Odorous indeed must be the mead
Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
With lilies at the brink,
And sugar-sweet their sap.”

Golden head by golden head,
Like two pigeons in one nest
Folded in each other’s wings,
They lay down in their curtained bed :
Like two blossoms on one stem
Like two flakes of new-fall’n snow,
Like two wands of ivory
Tipped with gold for awful kings.
Moon and stars gazed in at them,
Wind sang to them lullaby,
Lumbering owls forebore to fly,
Not a bat flapped to and fro

Round their nest:
Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
When the first cock crowed his warning,
Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
Laura rose with Lizzie:
Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
Aired and set to rights the house,
Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
Fed their poultry, sat and sewed;
Talked as modest maidens should:
Lizzie with an open heart,
Laura in an absent dream,
One content, one sick in part;
One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came:
They went with pitchers to the reedy brook;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from its deep.
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
Then turning homeward said: "The sunset flushes
Those furthest loftiest crags;
Come, Laura, not another maiden lags.
No willful squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep."

But Laura loitered still among the rushes,
And said the bank was steep,
And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fallen, the wind not chill;
Listening ever, but not catching

The customary cry,
"Come buy, come buy,"
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words:
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling—
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, "O Laura, come;
I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not look:
You should not loiter longer at this brook:
Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each glow-worm winks her spark,
Let us go home before the night grows dark;
For clouds may gather
Though this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us through;
Then if we lost our way what should we do?"
Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry alone,
That goblin cry,
"Come buy our fruits, come buy."
Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit?
Must she no more such succous pasture find,
Gone deaf and blind?
Her tree of life drooped from the root:
She said not one word in her heart's sore ache:
But peering thro' the dimness, nought discerning,
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way;
So crept to bed, and lay
Silent till Lizzie slept;
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
And gnashed her teeth for balked desire, and wept
As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
Laura kept watch in vain
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
She never caught again the goblin cry,
"Come buy, come buy;"—
She never spied the goblin men
Hawking their fruits along the glen:
But when the noon waxed bright
Her hair grew thin and gray;
She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
To swift decay and burn
Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-stone
She set it by a wall that faced the south;
Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
Watched for a waxing shoot,
But there came none.
It never saw the sun,
It never felt the trickling moisture run:
While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
She dreamed of melons, as a traveler sees
False waves in desert drouth
With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.

She no more swept the house,
Tended the fowls or cows,
Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
Brought water from the brook:
But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear
To watch her sister's cankerous care,
Yet not to share.
She night and morning
Caught the goblin's cry:
"Come buy our orchard fruits,

Come buy, come buy :''—
Beside the brook, along the glen,
She heard the tramp of goblin men,
The voice and stir
Poor Laura could not hear;
Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
But feared to pay too dear.
She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
Who should have been a bride;
But who for joys brides hope to have
Fell sick and died
In her gay prime,
In earliest winter time,
With the first glazing rime,
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.

Till Laura dwindling
Seemed knocking at Death's door.
Then Lizzie weighed no more
Better and worse;
But put a silver penny in her purse,
Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
At twilight, halted by the brook :
And for the first time in her life
Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
When they spied her peeping :
Came towards her hobbling,
Flying, running, leaping,
Puffing and blowing,
Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
Clucking and gobbling,
Mopping and mowing,
Full of airs and graces.
Pulling wry faces,
Demure grimaces,
Cat-like and rat-like,
Ratel- and wombat-like,

Snail-paced in a hurry,
Parrot-voiced and whistler,
Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
Chattering like magpies,
Fluttering like pigeons,
Gliding like fishes,—
Hugged her and kissed her;
Squeezed and caressed her:
Stretched up their dishes,
Panniers, and plates:
“Look at our apples
Russet and dun,
Bob at our cherries,
Bite at our peaches,
Citrons and dates,
Grapes for the asking,
Pears red with basking
Out in the sun,
Plums on their twigs;
Pluck them and suck them,—
Pomegranates, figs.”

“Good folk,” said Lizzie,
Mindful of Jeanie:
“Give me much and many:”
Held out her apron,
Tossed them her penny.
“Nay, take a seat with us,
Honor and eat with us,”
They answered grinning:
“Our feast is but beginning.
Night yet is early,
Warm and dew-pearly,
Wakeful and starry:
Such fruits as these
No man can carry;
Half their bloom would fly,
Half their dew would dry,
Half their flavor would pass by.

Sit down and feast with us,
Be welcome guest with us,
Cheer you and rest with us."—
"Thank you," said Lizzie: "But one waits
At home alone for me:
So without further parleying,
If you will not sell me any
Of your fruits though much and many,
Give me back my silver penny
I tossed you for a fee."—
They began to scratch their pates,
No longer wagging, purring,
But visibly demurring,
Grunting and snarling.
One called her proud,
Cross-grained, uncivil;
Their tones waxed loud,
Their looks were evil.
Lashing their tails
They trod and hustled her,
Elbowed and jostled her,
Clawed with their nails,
Barking, mewing, hissing, mocking,
Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
Twitched her hair out by the roots,
Stamped upon her tender feet,
Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
Like a lily in a flood,—
Like a rock of blue-veined stone
Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
Like a beacon left alone
In a hoary roaring sea,
Sending up a golden fire,—
Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
White with blossoms honey-sweet
Sore beset by wasp and bee,—

Like a royal virgin town
Topped with gilded dome and spire
Close beleaguered by a fleet
Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
Twenty cannot make him drink.
Though the goblins cuffed and caught her,
Coaxed and fought her,
Bullied and besought her,
Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
Kicked and knocked her,
Mauled and mocked her,
Lizzie uttered not a word;
Would not open lip from lip
Lest they should cram a mouthful in:
But laughed in heart to feel the drip
Of juice that syruped all her face,
And lodged in dimples of her chin,
And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
At last the evil people,
Worn out by her resistance,
Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
Along whichever road they took,
Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
Some writhed into the ground,
Some dived into the brook
With ring and ripple,
Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
Lizzie went her way;
Knew not was it night or day;
Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,
Threaded copse and dingle,
And heard her penny jingle
Bouncing in her purse,—
Its bounce was music to her ear.

She ran and ran
As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged her with gibe or curse
Or something worse :
But not one goblin skurried after,
Nor was she pricked by fear ;
The kind heart made her windy-paced
That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
And inward laughter.
She cried, "Laura," up the garden,
"Did you miss me ?
Come and kiss me.
Never mind my bruises,
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
Eat me, drink me, love me ;
Laura, make much of me ;
For your sake I have braved the glen
And had to do with goblin merchant men."

Laura started from her chair,
Flung her arms up in the air,
Clutched her hair :
"Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
For my sake the fruit forbidden ?
Must your light like mine be hidden,
Your young life like mine be wasted,
Undone in mine undoing,
And ruined in my ruin,
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden ?"—
She clung about her sister,
Kissed and kissed and kissed her :
Tears once again
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
Dropping like rain
After long sultry drouth ;
Shaking with anguish fear, and pain,
She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
She loathed the feast :
Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
Rent all her robe, and wrung
Her hands in lamentable haste,
And beat her breast.
Her locks streamed like the torch
Borne by a racer at full speed,
Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
Or like an eagle when she stems the light
Straight toward the sun,
Or like a caged thing freed,
Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her heart,
Met the fire smoldering there
And overbore its lesser flame ;
She gorged on bitterness without a name :
Ah fool, to choose such part
Of soul-consuming care !
Sense failed in the mortal strife :
Like the watch-tower of a town
Which an earthquake shatters down,
Like a lightning-stricken mast,
Like a wind-uprooted tree
Spun about,
Like a foam-topped waterspout
Cast down headlong in the sea,
She fell at last ;
Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life ?

Life out of death.

That night long, Lizzie watched by her,
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
Felt for her breath,
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
With tears and fanning leaves.

But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
And early reapers plodded to the place
Of golden sheaves,
And dew-wet grass
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
And new buds with new day
Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
Laura awoke as from a dream,
Laughed in the innocent old way,
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice;
Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of gray,
Her breath was sweet as May,
And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
Afterwards, when both were wives
With children of their own;
Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
Their lives bound up in tender lives;
Laura would call the little ones
And tell them of her early prime,
Those pleasant days long gone
Of not-returning time:
Would talk about the haunted glen,
The wicked quaint fruit-merchant men,
Their fruits like honey to the throat
But poison in the blood
(Men sell not such in any town):
Would tell them how her sister stood
In deadly peril to do her good,
And win the fiery antidote:
Then joining hands to little hands
Would bid them cling together,—
“For there is no friend like a sister
In calm or stormy weather;
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen whilst one stands.”

XVI. THE PRE-RAPHAELITES. Originally this term, which refers to the Italian artists prior to Raphael, was applied to those who would revive the purity and fineness of the work of those early painters, but it has become much more widely known as referring to a school of Englishmen who in the Mid-Victorian Era accomplished great results both in art and literature. The brotherhood originated with a band of seven young men, among whom were the brothers Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt and others, and its work began with the appearance of *The Eve of St. Agnes*, a picture by Holman Hunt in Pre-Raphaelistic style. For a time the brotherhood published *The Germ*, a periodical in which appeared some of the early poems of the Rossettis.

The movement was recognized and praised by Ruskin, and, though it gradually died out, it produced a marked effect upon English painting and to a lesser degree upon English literature, to which it left some monuments that are beautiful examples of "painter's poetry" from the pens of Rossetti, William Morris and Swinburne.

William Morris (1834-1896) was educated at Exeter College, Oxford, where he formed a friendship with Edward Burne-Jones, afterwards the celebrated painter, and in later years with Rossetti. In 1858 he published *The Defense of Guenevere*, after which his interest turned rather to painting, though he resumed poetry again and produced some elegant lays

of the romantic type, as well as a number of romances of similar nature. In 1861 he organized a firm of manufacturers of artistic furniture and furnishings, and later his attention was turned to illuminated manuscripts and to the arts of dyeing and carpet-weaving. In 1890 he founded the celebrated Kelmscott Press, upon which he printed some of his romances and many other books of wonderful beauty and durable worth, now all much sought after as among the most attractive examples of English typography.

We have space for but one selection from his poems, and that perhaps not typical, though it shows the romantic setting and the vividness of artistic coloring which was characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelites. *The Blue Closet* was written for a water color painted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti:

THE DAMOZELS

Lady Alice, lady Louise,
Between the wash of the tumbling seas
We are ready to sing, if so ye please:
So lay your long hands on the keys;
Sing, "*Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead
Boomed in the wind a knell for the dead,
Though no one tolled it, a knell for the dead,*

LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell
Not too loud; for you sing not well
If you drown the faint boom of the bell;
He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead
Flapped on the banner of the dead;
(Was he asleep, or was he dead?)*

LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,
Two damozels wearing purple and green,
Four lone ladies dwelling here
From day to day and year to year;
And there is none to let us go,
To break the locks of the doors below,
Or shovel away the heaped-up snow;
And when we die no man will know
That we are dead; but they give us leave,
Once every year on Christmas-eve,
To sing in the Closet Blue one song;
And we should be so long, so long,
If we dared, in singing; for dream on dream,
They float on in a happy stream;
Float from the gold strings, float from the keys,
Float from the opened lips of Louise;
But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through
The chinks of the tiles of the Closet Blue;

*And ever the great bell overhead
Booms in the wind a knell for the dead,
The wind plays on it a knell for the dead.*

THEY SING ALL TOGETHER

How long ago was it, how long ago,
He came to this tower with hands full of snow?
"Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel down!" he said,
And sprinkled the dusty snow over my head.

He watched the snow melting, it ran through my hair,
Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders and bare.

"I cannot weep for thee, poor love Louise,
For my tears are all hidden deep under the seas;
In a gold and blue casket she keeps all my tears,
But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old years;

“Yea, they grow gray with time, grow small and dry,
I am so feeble now, would I might die.”

*And in truth the great bell overhead
Left off his pealing for the dead,
Perchance, because the wind was dead.*

Will he come back again, or is he dead?
O! is he sleeping, my scarf round his head?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there,
With the long scarlet scarf I used to wear?

Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come here!
Both his soul and his body to me are most dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to receive
Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-eve.

*Through the floor shot up a lily red,
With a patch of earth from the land of the dead,
For he was strong in the land of the dead.*

What matter that his cheeks were pale,
His kind kissed lips all gray?
“O, love Louise, have you waited long?”
“O, my lord Arthur, yea.”

What if his hair that brushed her cheek
Was stiff with frozen rime?
His eyes were grown quite blue again,
As in the happy time.

“O, love Louise, this is the key
Of the happy golden land!
O, sisters, cross the bridge with me,
My eyes are full of sand.
What matter that I cannot see,
If ye take me by the hand?”

*And ever the great bell overhead,
And the tumbling seas mourned for the dead;
For their song ceased, and they were dead!*

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) is coming to be regarded as one of the greatest English poets of the nineteenth century. He was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. He did not, however, take a degree from the latter institution, but while there he was known as a promising writer and an adept in French and Italian. His meeting with Rossetti, who had come to Oxford to do some mural painting, was followed by a close friendship which produced a very important effect upon Swinburne's life. Later, in company with Walter Savage Landor, William Rossetti and George Meredith, Swinburne lived at Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, already famous in literary annals. In 1856 his tragedy, *Atalanta in Calydon*, appeared; while critics recognized in it the new poet's skill, they abused him roundly for the sensuality which they found in its pages. In general, Swinburne's life was uneventful, but as a young man he was greatly admired among his friends, though later in life he was more retiring, and it is said that only once did he speak in public. Swinburne was a voluminous writer of prose as well as of poetry, but it is upon the latter that his fame will rest; as we have seen in so many other instances, his lyrics are his finest work. *Tristram of Lyonesse* is a long lyrical epic, in which Swinburne turns with others to the Arthurian legends for his subject. *Erechtheus*, a classical drama, and *Marino Faliero*, *Lochrine* and *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards*, three historical tragedies,

are the most important of his dramatic writings. Swinburne composed many beautiful sonnets and a great number of lyrics, all marked by fine artistic skill and beauty of expression. Sometimes he approached very close to the human heart, as in the following lines upon *A Child's Laughter*:

All the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds on earth may bring
 All sweet sounds together;
Sweeter far than all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundawn stirr'd,
Welling water's winsome word,
 Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none
Hearing ere its chime be done
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of man beneath the sun,
 Hoped in heaven hereafter;
Soft and strong and loud and light,
Very sound of very light
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
 Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome roll'd
Never forth such notes, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant mouth of gold
 Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale—why, then
Something seen and heard of men

Might be half as sweet as when
Laughs a child of seven.

Joseph Mazzini, the Italian patriot, died in 1872, and a fine monument was erected to his memory at Genoa. The following *Lines on the Monument of Giuseppe Mazzini* are in Swinburne's best vein :

Italia, mother of the souls of men,
Mother divine,
Of all that served thee best with sword or pen,
All sons of thine,

Thou knowest that here the likeness of the best
Before thee stands:
The head most high, the heart found faithfullest,
The purest hands.

Above the fume and foam of time that flits,
The soul, we know,
Now sits on high where Alighieri sits
With Angelo.

Not his own heavenly tongue hath heavenly speech
Enough to say
What this man was, whose praise no thought may reach,
No words can weigh.

Since man's first mother brought to mortal birth
Her first-born son,
Such grace befell not ever man on earth
As crowns this One.

Of God nor man was ever this thing said:
That he could give
Life back to her who gave him, whence his dead
Mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and slain,
With fast-sealed eyes,

And bade the dead rise up and live again,
And she did rise :

And all the world was bright with her through him :
But dark with strife,
Like heaven's own sun that storming clouds bedim,
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanished ; hate and fear
Have had their span
Of time to hurt and are not : He is here,
The sunlike man.

City superb, that hadst Columbus first
For sovereign son,
Be prouder that thy breast hath later nurst
This mightier One.

Glory be his for ever, while his land
Lives and is free,
As with controlling breath and sovereign hand
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by thousands told
That crown her fame,
But highest of all that heaven and earth behold,
Mazzini's name.

XVII. MINOR POETS. During the long Victorian Era there were many poets whose rank, though decidedly secondary to that of those whose works we have already considered, might be regarded as first in many other epochs, for in the nineteenth century poetry was second only to fiction. We must hastily review a few of those whose names are familiar, but of whose works the reader may appreciate a few definitive words. We will consider them in the order of their birth.

1. *Bryan Waller Procter* (1787–1874), better known as Barry Cornwall, shows unmistakably the influence of Lamb, whose biography he wrote, and of Leigh Hunt, writers of the preceding age. In fact, Procter may be considered as the connecting link in poetry between the two eras. Most of his work, however, is now forgotten excepting by those who read extensively.

2. *Edward Fitzgerald* (1809–1883) was born Edward Purcell, but when the lad was nine years old his father assumed his wife's name, Fitzgerald. At Trinity College, Cambridge, the young man made friends with Thackeray and Thompson, but it was not until later that he became intimate with Tennyson. On leaving college, he settled down to the life of a country gentleman, but in 1851 he began publishing his writings, which included a variety of prose productions, and a few years later he published translations of the dramas of Calderon. On the fifteenth of January, 1859, appeared without any flourish of advertising trumpets—in fact, almost without announcement—the one great work for which he will continue to be known, namely, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. Rossetti, Lord Houghton, Swinburne and other Pre-Raphaelites were instrumental in rescuing the little volume from obscurity, and for a long time it was famous among that coterie before it became generally known. Since that time, however, its popularity has increased unceasingly. The poem

has been treated at length under the work of Omar Khayyam, in our Persian literature.

Fitzgerald was an indolent, innocent sort of an individual, who "dabbled about in the river in his boat, loved flowers, music, fine verses, and occasionally the companionship of old friends, among whom he included Carlyle, Tennyson and others." The fame which came to him before his death was unsought and unwelcome, and it is a curious fact that no one in our literature has ever risen to so great a height with so apparent a lack of effort and ambition.

3. *Arthur Hugh Clough* (1809-1861) was the son of a Liverpool cotton merchant, but was educated at Oriel College, Oxford. There he came under the influence of the youthful Newman's High-Church principles, but was driven from them by a period of skepticism, during which he traveled on the continent, seeing Paris in the revolutionary movement of 1849 and Rome during its siege by the French. The remainder of his life, with the exception of a visit to America, was spent quietly in England. Most of his works contain deep thought, but he was too much enamored of experiments in strange meters, and, excepting in a few of his lyrics, he was too commonplace to attain continued popularity. He is better known now, perhaps, as the subject of Matthew Arnold's beautiful elegy, *Thyrsis*.

4. *Sir Edwin Arnold* (1820-1904) was educated in London and Oxford and went to India

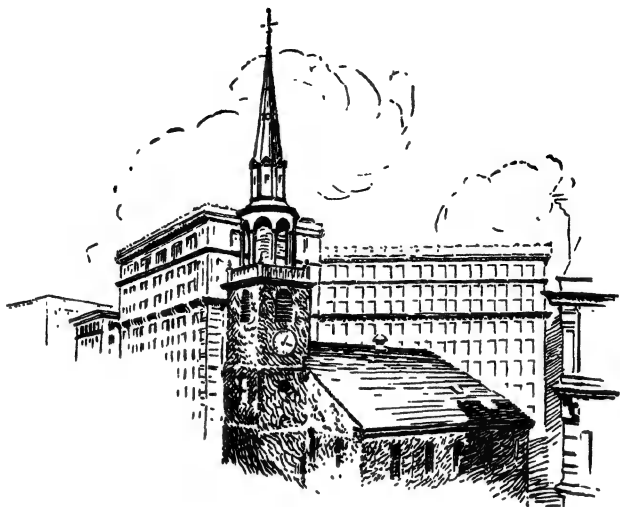
as a schoolmaster, where during the mutiny he was able to render great service to the government. His chief title for remembrance, however, is as a poet, and his most famous poem is *The Light of Asia*, an epic on the life and teachings of Buddha, from which we have quoted extensively in our explanation of the teachings of the Eastern prophet.

5. *Edward Bulwer-Lytton*, the first Earl of Lytton (1831–1891), the son of Bulwer-Lytton, the novelist, and better known as Owen Meredith, achieved distinction both as statesman and poet. In 1860, after publishing several other poems, *Lucile* appeared from the press, and was at once accorded an immense measure of popularity, which, however, has since considerably decreased.

6. *Andrew Lang* (1844–1912) was a brilliant scholar in the Edinburgh Academy, St. Andrew's University and Balliol College, Oxford, and later established a reputation as one of the most versatile of modern journalists. He distinguished himself as an historian; as a collector of fairy tales and ballads, which he turned into delightful form for children or explained in masterly fashion; as a writer of charming essays on literature and religion, and as a poet of exquisite skill in the writing of ballads and short lyrics.

XVIII. CONCLUSION. To carry our account of English literature beyond the Victorian Era seems superfluous, though we have already trenched upon that ground in considering the

work of some of those writers who lived beyond the period we have assigned to the Victorian writers. Within the last fifty years a host of essayists, novelists and poets has arisen, and more fine tales have been told than in the preceding hundred years. They have been told, moreover, with greater skill in plot, greater knowledge of character development, more naturally, and with greater charm of incident than ever before. The modern poets, like Kipling and his school, if they have fallen below the rank of Tennyson and the Brownings, have still kept pace with the lesser writers of the preceding age, and in time their work may become even more highly esteemed. As we said at the beginning of our discussion of the Victorian Age, it is impossible for us now to give any estimate of present-day literature or to predict what changes may come in the future; so we close the subject at a time when the characteristics of good literature throughout the world are practically the same, and books written in any of the great European languages are found when translated to be so similar in thought, content and style that their authors might all have been trained in the one school. The purpose of this work, then, has been to trace the progress of literature from its beginnings at so many different sources until now in the twentieth century it has flowed through myriad channels and gathered into one great universal sea.



CHAPTER XXXI

AMERICAN WRITERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS

BOSTON. Boston always has occupied a somewhat isolated position. It is not on any of the great highways to other places; it is not the terminus of any great transatlantic steamship lines, and until the construction of its numerous railways was not in ready communication with other American cities. When people go to Boston it is because they wish to go to Boston; while New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis and other great cities are on lines of travel that naturally bring to them many people whose ultimate destination is else-

where. Boston stands for the whole of Eastern Massachusetts, and what is true of her is true of the entire region.

Add to this fact of geographical isolation the further conditions that Boston and vicinity were settled by a people possessed of high moral sentiment, intense energy and the stern power of self-repression; that her settlers came to this country to be free to worship as they pleased; that they meant to preserve their integrity to the last, it can be readily seen that conservatism and individuality were the natural result. Social distinctions arose, continued to be observed till far into the nineteenth century, and are not wholly extinguished even now. The clergy early assumed and long maintained a dictatorial power that was often unquestioned by the laity; the wealthy merchants constituted the aristocracy, while the farmers, the poorer class in the cities and the servants generally were as decidedly inferior in social position as though the people did not pride themselves on their democracy.

But the Calvinistic creed had taught the people rectitude of conduct, and perhaps unwittingly had given them the truth-searching spirit. The clergy watched and criticized their congregations both as to laxities in daily life and as to backsliding or wanderings from the true faith. Accordingly, attention became centered on religion, and the congregation in its turn became as watchful and as critical as the preacher himself. Then the keen intellects of

those watching hundreds became restive under the restraints about them and both pew and pulpit began to think in new lines.

In some such way as this it came about that Calvinism gave way to the new Unitarianism, so that when the nineteenth century opened there was in Boston but one Calvinistic church, the Old South, long known to the irreverent as "Brimstone Corner." But we cannot go into these controversies except as far as is necessary to make clear the greatest literature America has known. Unitarianism is no longer in the ascendent, but at the time of which we are writing the men who led the movement were of such refined, cultivated and morally beautiful character that it is little wonder they revolutionized thought, even in orthodox old Boston.

The rapid spread of Unitarian ideas followed closely after the War of 1812, and the outburst of literary power was coincident with Boston's greatest commercial and business prosperity. The building of numerous railways had connected the various outlying villages; towns and factories had arisen, and the fisheries and other commercial industries had made their influence felt far at sea. This epoch was a renaissance for the Puritan colonies as much as was the Shakespearean period a new birth for England. It was, too, a time of intellectual unrest, of the abandonment of old ideas, of irreverence for the past and of a profound and unwarranted confidence in the future.

II. THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS. An outgrowth of this spirit was the philosophical movement known as Transcendentalism. The exact doctrines of this school are hard to define, for there were really no fixed principles of faith. To some the word meant one thing, while to others its meaning was quite different, but perhaps all would admit at least the definition given in 1840 by George Ripley, a very worthy gentleman who was for a time the recognized leader of the Transcendental movement:

There is a class of persons who desire a reform in the prevailing philosophy of the day. They are called Transcendentalists because they believe in an order of truths which transcends the sphere of the external senses. Their leading idea is the supremacy of mind over matter. Hence they maintain that the truth of religion does not depend on tradition or historical facts, but has an unerring witness in the soul. There is a light, they believe, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; there is a faculty in all—the most degraded, the most ignorant, the most obscure,—to perceive spiritual truth when distinctly presented; and the ultimate appeal on all moral questions is not to a jury of scholars, a hierarchy of divines, or the prescriptions of a creed, but to the common sense of the human race.

Practically it was felt that the Transcendentalists were dreamers rather than students; that the subjects of their thought were rather the things that cannot be known than those which by patient scientific research might be discovered; speculation was to them more attractive than logical reasoning.

However, they did make an attempt to put their philosophy into practice. *The Dial* was established by Ripley to advocate their views, but after a brief-lived popularity among its supporters it died a natural death, four years from the date of the first number. Then Brook Farm, a tract of two hundred acres about nine miles from Boston, was purchased. Here it was proposed to establish a socialistic colony whose members should live in perfect equality, free to think and to grow in mind and soul, but at the same time contributing such labor as was necessary to keep the colony in existence. Property was held in common; each member was allowed a certain percent on his investment and was paid a fixed price for his labor. He might work at what he pleased and was paid the same wages whether his work was intellectual or manual. Members could live in separate establishments or in the common house, but each must pay his living expenses. It was all a beautiful dream of a community in which brotherly love should flourish and in which the arts and sciences should multiply, while vice and crime became unknown. But it was all a dream, however beautiful, and lasted only five years. The energetic bore the burdens as in the world at large, and the indolent profited by the exertions of others.

Finding their own simple organization a failure, the Transcendentalists adopted the organization of Fourier, a French socialist leader then in the height of his popularity. Finan-

cial troubles had come upon them before the change, and when in 1846 their community building burned, the colony was abandoned.

The Brook Farm experiment had proved a failure, yet it was not without its redeeming features. It had been a delightful experience to many, had brought together some of the most brilliant people of the day under conditions highly favorable to their development, and, more than that, it had given a strong impetus for good to a number of young people who had been sent there for their education. It is pleasant to remember that while the community adopted Fourierism in part, they quietly ignored the free-love doctrines, and although men and women lived at Brook Farm together, the marriage relation was always respected, and no suspicion of scandal ever arose against them. So great, so pure and so high-minded a group of people it would be difficult to bring together again. The whole experiment is unique in history, and the influence it left on literature is without a parallel.

And who were the Transcendentalists? George Ripley was the practical leader in the movement, and the Brook Farm experiment left him a debt it took years to satisfy. He became a writer for religious magazines and a regular member of the staff of the *New York Tribune*. A. Bronson Alcott, father of Louisa M. Alcott, an impractical, genial and whole-souled man who taught school and lectured, who wrote and conversed both in England and

America, represented the extreme of Transcendental philosophy. He finally established at his home the Concord School of Philosophy, where he and other notable men lectured and conversed during a series of seven years. Jones Very, the saintly poet of Transcendentalism, wrote weak verse not worthy of admiration.

Margaret Fuller, the most highly-gifted of the acknowledged leaders, was born in 1810. She was extremely precocious, and an unwise father stimulated her intellect and pushed her forward in her studies so rapidly that the effect could always be noticed. She became arrogant, vain, sentimental and exceedingly fond of admiration. So far did these qualities develop that she was often severely criticized, and really with some justice. Her romantic attachment for Emerson and her utter failure to interest that calm man to a greater extent than the friendship he was satisfied to give her, and with which she was at last content, is one of the curious idyls of literature. She was in her day a writer of considerable popularity, but her emotional nature and her prejudices prevented her from making a permanent success as a literary critic. She went to England, thence to the continent, and finally to Italy, where she became deeply interested in the revolutionary schemes that were then leading to the United Italy of to-day. Here she became infatuated with a young Italian patriot named Ossoli, whom she married in secret. Her brief life with him was filled with care and anxiety;

a child was born; the father was in the battles around Rome or embroiled in anxious plotting. Finally, they determined to return to America, but on the way the captain of the ship died of smallpox, and the little Ossoli boy was stricken with the same dread disease. Then, within sight of land off the harbor of New York, the ill-fated ship sank, carrying with it the entire Ossoli family. The most notable characteristic of Margaret Fuller Ossoli was her power to win confidence and friendship, and few women could count among their warm personal friends so many famous and talented people.

III. HAWTHORNE. Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) was a true American. From his father who, like many of his ancestors, was a shipmaster, the boy inherited resolution of character; from his mother, beauty and rare refinement. His childhood was rather unusual from its lack of regular education; his studies seem not to have been formal, but he delighted in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Shakespeare's dramas and Milton's poetry. When ten years old he was sent to his uncle, who had interested himself in the boy since the death of the latter's father. On his uncle's farm near Lake Sebago he spent a most profitable year, rambling in the woods, delighting in their solitude, observing and recording what he had noted. He then returned to Salem to finish his preparation for Bowdoin College, which he entered in 1821. Here he

failed to distinguish himself as a scholar, but excelled in English theme-writing and Greek and Latin translation, and made two influential friends, the poet Longfellow and Franklin Pierce. After his graduation in 1824 came the period of his life which brought him the reputation of being eccentric. Literature he had chosen as a profession; that meant, to one of his exacting sense of duty, a thorough, independent preparation. For twelve years he lived at his mother's house as a recluse, shunning society, often even that of his mother and sisters, scarcely leaving the house except on lonely rambles. These years, devoted not to regular study but to brooding, dreaming and written expression, were of the greatest significance. At this time he perfected his marvelous style, applying to it most conscientious and rigorous tests. His writings, however, notwithstanding their merit, received no wider circulation than that of local papers and magazines.

For a time he was a member of the Brook Farm community, but was soon glad to abandon it, for though he tried "to convert himself into a milkmaid" he did not enjoy the experience any more than being "a chambermaid to cows and pigs." Some of the experiences of Miles Coverdale in *The Blithedale Romance* are Hawthorne's own while in the community.

He was married to Miss Peabody of Salem, in 1842, and settled at Concord in the "Old Manse." His *Twice Told Tales*, written while

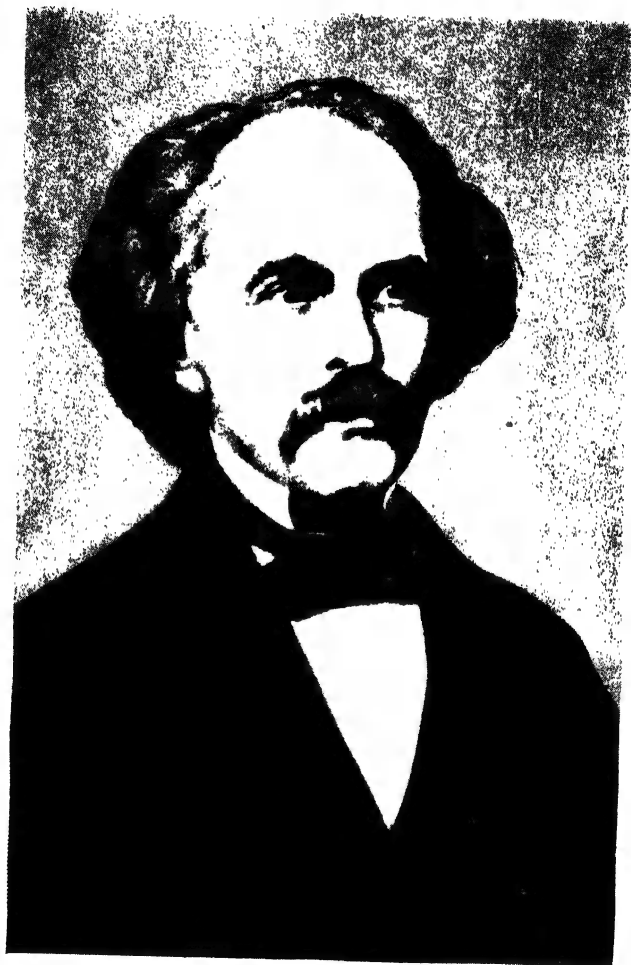
he was in seclusion, had been published, and fame was coming to him slowly. He had profited by his wholesome, practical life as weigher and gauger in the Boston custom-house and as surveyor of the port of Salem, so that when a change in political parties removed him from the latter office he was prepared to produce the first and greatest of his four long romances, *The Scarlet Letter*. This won for him immediate fame. *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Wonder Book* for children, *The Blithedale Romance* and *Tanglewood Tales* successively appeared. President Pierce, perhaps his most intimate friend, appointed Hawthorne to the consulship at Liverpool, and for four years he lived in England. Then he traveled in Italy, where *The Marble Faun* was written.

After his return, his health became steadily poorer. Thinking to gain new strength, he started on a little tour with ex-President Pierce (1864), but got no farther than Plymouth, New Hampshire, when the sudden death he had always wished for overtook him. Five days afterwards he was buried in "Sleepy Hollow," in the Concord cemetery.

Hawthorne's personality left a most vivid impression on those who came in contact with him. His manly form and strikingly beautiful face won him immediate attention, and his silence and reticence set him off in a world of his own where none might approach. Joined with his resolute strength was a distinctly fem-

inine element of character, a fine susceptibility that showed in every expression of his face, and in an extreme shyness which caused him to blush on the slightest provocation, even when among intimate friends. Social occasions were torture to him. His calm, gentle spirit was satisfied in the atmosphere of his home, made happy by one of the most perfect marriages.

Often Hawthorne has been misunderstood and called a pessimist and a fatalist who develops repelling subjects in morbid style. Even his friend, the philosopher Emerson, felt that his genius had been used rather unfortunately and had taken too dark a color. But according to his wife and children, he was the very reverse of gloomy and morbid. His daughter speaks of him as "the gayest person I ever saw; there never was such a playmate in all the world;" and his wife tells of his cheerfulness and wit. The man's spirit was too great and true, too nearly in harmony with all that is good, to limit itself to a gloomy view of life. It was merely that in the all-engrossing observation of the sadder side of man's inner life, depicting the origin, growth and effects of sin best suited his genius. The heart, with its struggles, its falls and its triumphs, rather than the external world and its conditions, constituted for him the reality of life. With the aid of constant introspection and a marvelous penetration, he made his studies, deploring the curse of sin and moved to the depths of his nature by suffering inevitable from transgression.



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE
1804-1864

But although Hawthorne's life-work was this ethical study, never did he aim at making his writings the direct medium of moral teaching. The artistic, beauty-loving side of his nature was too strong to allow of his becoming a preaching author. A proof of the abiding greatness of his works is that there are woven in with them moral problems for the solution of which he gives suggestions but never advances an arbitrary theory. The art in his works was secured by a thorough study of effective expression, yet his style seems a natural growth from the very essence of the inner thought, so naturally and easily does it flow along. It is sometimes delicately humorous, and always clear, even when expressing most subtle thoughts and fanciful images. The mystery and shadowy influences, the spirit of another and superhuman world, which haunts all of Hawthorne's works, appear among familiar scenes and find expression in a style which might describe commonplace fact.

IV. HAWTHORNE'S ROMANCES. Probably the most popular of Hawthorne's romances is *The Marble Faun*, which he began while in Italy, finished after his return to this country, and published originally under the title *The Transformation*. The book, interesting in itself and written in Hawthorne's inimitable style, contains his views upon Italian art, and from its intense local color is almost universally read by those who visit Rome. The development of the character of Donatello is remarkably well

done, and he preserves a human interest that is almost equaled by that which the reader feels in Miriam and Hilda. But after all, the literary critics might very properly rank *The Marble Faun*, with all its brilliancy of description and sentimental interest, far below Hawthorne's great Puritan romance, which stands unequaled in American literature, if not in that of the mother country.

The Scarlet Letter is the most "Hawthornesque" of all the great writer's work, and when we use that word we do it advisedly, for no one has ever had so unique a style or one so thoroughly personal or more certain to be recognized by an appreciative reader. The grimness, ugliness and stern morality of Puritan nature were never better delineated, and if the novel has not attained the greatest popularity on both sides of the ocean it is probably because of its extreme local color, which is no less vivid, however different, than that of *The Marble Faun*.

The subject of *The Scarlet Letter*, sin and its inevitable punishment, makes an universal appeal to human beings, although the mystical and half-symbolic treatment of the scarlet letter and the introduction of such a fantastic character as Pearl may lessen somewhat the force of the lesson and lead thoughtless readers to question the absolute sincerity of the author. Nevertheless, Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale are vividly real, and the bitter revenge taken by Roger Chillingworth is thoroughly in

keeping with Puritan character, even though somewhat depressing to the modern reader. The introduction to *The Scarlet Letter* consists of a delightful essay relating some of Hawthorne's experiences in the Salem custom-house, which, while it reminds us in some respects of the writings of Charles Lamb, is thoroughly original. A trait of character in one of his subordinates is picked out in an extremely vivid manner as follows:

His gormandism was a highly agreeable trait; and to hear him talk of roast meat was as appetizing as a pickle or an oyster. As he possessed no higher attribute, and neither sacrificed nor vitiated any spiritual endowment by devoting all his energies and ingenuities to subserve the delight and profit of his maw, it always pleased and satisfied me to hear him expatiate on fish, poultry, and butcher's meat, and the most eligible methods of preparing them for the table. His reminiscences of good cheer, however ancient the date of the actual banquet, seemed to bring the savor of pig or turkey under one's very nostrils. There were flavors on his palate that had lingered there not less than sixty or seventy years, and were still apparently as fresh as the mutton-chop which he had just devoured for his breakfast. I have heard him smack his lips over dinners, every guest at which, except himself, had long been food for worms. . . . The chief tragic event of the old man's life, so far as I could judge, was his mishap with a certain goose which lived and died some twenty or forty years ago; a goose of most promising figure, but which at table proved so inveterately tough that the carving-knife would make no impression on its carcass, and it could only be divided with an axe and handsaw.

Charming and powerful as is *The House of the Seven Gables*, with its delightful Phoebe

and original Uncle Venner, and genuinely pathetic as are many of the scenes, its appeal is not so universal as that of *The Scarlet Letter*, and its popularity has proved much less. In this work, however, as elsewhere, appears Hawthorne's sympathetic interest in the sinner, howevermuch he may decry the sin. In one place he has written, "Man must not disclaim his brotherhood, even with the guiltiest, since, though his hand be clean, his heart has surely been polluted by the fleeting phantoms of iniquity."

The chief interest in *The Blithedale Romance* lies perhaps in its relation to Brook Farm, while the later romances, *Septimius Felton*, *Dr. Grimshawe's Secret* and the fragmentary *Dolliver Romance* are distinctly inferior and show the failing powers of a genius which had been seriously affected by misfortunes and injured no less by the brooding melancholy which was brought on largely by the Civil War and events which had led up to it.

No sketch of Hawthorne would be complete without more than a mention of his shorter stories, which appeared in several different collections. *The Wonder Book*, *Twice Told Tales*, *Mosses from the Old Manse* and *Grandfather's Chair* are all names of books familiar to the lover of short stories, and most of them are household words to the children of our land. *The Legend of the Great Stone Face*, *The Ambitious Guest*, *The Pine Tree Shillings*, *The Chimera*, *The Golden Touch* and a score of

other single tales have only to be mentioned to show that in whatever department of literature Hawthorne worked he touched everything with the magic of his genius. We have had no other writer like him.

Julian Hawthorne, in his biography of his father, says that *Fancy's Show-Box*, which follows, was the result of a bitter personal experience. It seems that at one time Hawthorne was led by a malicious woman to think that a friend of his had insulted her, and Hawthorne, in an outburst of indignation, challenged the friend to fight a duel. The friend, however, was able to establish the character of the woman and the malice of her act, and, having done so, requested a renewal of Hawthorne's friendship, which was promptly granted.

But this was not to be the end of the episode, for another friend of Hawthorne's, Cilley by name, was the recipient of a challenge which he was under no obligation by the code of honor to accept; however, having heard of Hawthorne's action, he decided to accept it, met his antagonist, and was killed. The effect upon Hawthorne was profound, and under the feelings excited by the dreadful act he wrote *Fancy's Show-Box* in which is discussed the question, "whether the soul may contract the stains of guilt, in all their depth and flagrancy, from deeds which may have been plotted and resolved upon, but which physically have never had an existence:"

What is Guilt? A stain upon the soul. And it is a point of vast interest, whether the soul may contract such stains, in all their depth and flagrancy, from deeds which may have been plotted and resolved upon, but which, physically, have never had existence. Must the fleshly hand and visible frame of man set its seal to the evil designs of the soul, in order to give them their entire validity against the sinner? Or, while none but crimes perpetrated are cognizable before an earthly tribunal, will guilty thoughts—of which guilty deeds are no more than shadows—will these draw down the full weight of a condemning sentence in the supreme court of eternity? In the solitude of a midnight chamber, or in a desert, afar from men, or in a church, while the body is kneeling, the soul may pollute itself even with those crimes which we are accustomed to deem altogether carnal. If this be true, it is a fearful truth.

Let us illustrate the subject by an imaginary example. A venerable gentleman, one Mr. Smith, who had long been regarded as a pattern of moral excellence, was warming his aged blood with a glass or two of generous wine. His children being gone forth about their worldly business, and his grandchildren at school, he sat alone in a deep, luxurious armchair with his feet beneath a richly carved mahogany table. Some old people have a dread of solitude, and when better company may not be had, rejoice even to hear the quiet breathing of a babe, asleep upon the carpet. But Mr. Smith, whose silver hair was the bright symbol of a life unstained, except by such spots as are inseparable from human nature, had no need of a babe to protect him by its purity, nor of a grown person to stand between him and his own soul. Nevertheless, either Manhood must converse with Age, or Womanhood must sooth him with gentle cares, or Infancy must sport around his chair, or his thoughts will stray into the misty region of the past, and the old man be chill and sad. Wine will not always cheer him. Such might have been the case with Mr. Smith, when, through the brilliant medium of his glass of old Madeira, he beheld three

figures entering the room. These were Fancy, who had assumed the garb and aspect of an itinerant showman, with a box of pictures on her back; and Memory, in the likeness of a clerk, with a pen behind her ear, an ink-horn at her buttonhole, and a huge manuscript volume beneath her arm; and lastly, behind the other two, a person shrouded in a dusky mantle which concealed both face and form. But Mr. Smith had a shrewd idea that it was Conscience.

How kind of Fancy, Memory, and Conscience to visit the old gentleman, just as he was beginning to imagine that the wine had neither so bright a sparkle nor so excellent a flavor as when himself and the liquor were less aged! Through the dim length of the apartment, where crimson curtains muffled the glare of sunshine, and created a rich obscurity, the three guests drew near the silver-haired old man. Memory, with a finger between the leaves of her huge volume, placed herself at his right hand. Conscience, with her face still hidden in the dusky mantle, took her station on the left, so as to be next his heart; while Fancy set down her picture-box upon the table, with the magnifying-glass convenient to his eye. We can sketch merely the outlines of two or three out of the many pictures which, at the pulling of a string, successively peopled the box with the semblances of living scenes.

One was a moonlight picture; in the background, a lowly dwelling; and in front, partly shadowed by a tree, yet besprinkled with flakes of radiance, two youthful figures, male and female. The young man stood with folded arms, a haughty smile upon his lip, and a gleam of triumph in his eye, as he glanced downward at the kneeling girl. She was almost prostrate at his feet, evidently sinking under a weight of shame and anguish, which hardly allowed her to life her clasped hands in supplication. Her eyes she could not lift. But neither her agony, nor the lovely features on which it was depicted, nor the slender grace of the form which it convulsed, appeared to soften the obduracy of the young

man. He was the personification of triumphant scorn. Now, strange to say, as old Mr. Smith peeped through the magnifying-glass, which made the objects start out from the canvas with magical deception, he began to recognize the farm-house, the tree, and both the figures of the picture. The young man, in times long past, had often met his gaze within the looking-glass; the girl was the very image of his first love—his cottage-love—his Martha Burroughs! Mr. Smith was scandalized. "Oh, vile and slanderous picture!" he exclaims. "When have I triumphed over ruined innocence? Was not Martha wedded in her teens to David Tompkins, who won her girlish love, and long enjoyed her affection as a wife? And ever since his death, she has lived a reputable widow!" Meantime, Memory was turning over the leaves of her volume, rustling them to and fro with uncertain fingers, until, among the earlier pages, she found one which had reference to this picture. She reads it, close to the old gentleman's ear; it is a record merely of sinful thought, which never was embodied in an act; but, while Memory is reading, Conscience unveils her face, and strikes a dagger to the heart of Mr. Smith. Though not a deathblow, the torture was extreme.

The exhibition proceeded. One after another, Fancy displayed her pictures, all of which appeared to have been painted by some malicious artist, on purpose to vex Mr. Smith. Not a shadow of proof could have been adduced, in any earthly court, that he was guilty of the slightest of those sins which were thus made to stare him in the face. In one scene, there was a table set out, with several bottles, and glasses half filled with wine, which threw back the dull ray of an expiring lamp. There had been mirth and revelry, until the hand of the clock stood just at midnight, when Murder stepped between the boon companions. A young man had fallen on the floor, and lay stone dead, with a ghastly wound crushed into his temple, while over him, with a delirium of mingled rage and horror in his countenance, stood the youthful likeness of Mr. Smith. The murdered youth

wore the features of Edward Spencer! "What does this rascal of a painter mean?" cries Mr. Smith, provoked beyond all patience. "Edward Spencer was my earliest and dearest friend, true to me as I to him, through more than half a century. Neither I, nor any other, ever murdered him. Was he not alive within five years, and did he not, in token of our long friendship, bequeath me his gold-headed cane, and a mourning ring?" Again had Memory been turning over her volume, and fixed at length upon so confused a page, that she surely must have scribbled it when she was tipsy. The purport was, however, that, while Mr. Smith and Edward Spencer were heating their young blood with wine, a quarrel had flashed up between them, and Mr. Smith, in deadly wrath, had flung a bottle at Spencer's head. True, it missed its aim, and merely smashed a looking-glass; and the next morning, when the incident was imperfectly remembered, they had shaken hands with a hearty laugh. Yet, again, while Memory was reading, Conscience unveiled her face, struck a dagger to the heart of Mr. Smith, and quelled his remonstrance with her iron frown. The pain was quite excruciating.

Some of the pictures had been painted with so doubtful a touch, and in colors so faint and pale, that the subjects could barely be conjectured. A dull, semi-transparent mist had been thrown over the surface of the canvas, into which the figures seemed to vanish, while the eye sought most earnestly to fix them. But in every scene, however dubiously portrayed, Mr. Smith was invariably haunted by his own lineaments, at various ages, as in a dusty mirror. After poring several minutes over one of these blurred and almost indistinguishable pictures, he began to see that the painter had intended to represent him, now in the decline of life, as stripping the clothes from the backs of three half-starved children. "Really, this puzzles me!" quoth Mr. Smith, with the irony of conscious rectitude. "Asking pardon of the painter, I pronounce him a fool, as well as a scandalous knave. A man of my standing in the world, to be rob-

bing little children of their clothes! Ridiculous!" But while he spoke, Memory had searched her fatal volume, and found a page, which, with her sad, calm voice, she poured into his ear. It was not altogether inapplicable to the misty scene. It told how Mr. Smith had been grievously tempted, by many devilish sophistries, on the ground of a legal quibble, to commence a lawsuit against three orphan children, joint heirs to a considerable estate. Fortunately, before he was quite decided, his claims had turned out nearly as devoid of law as of justice. As Memory ceased to read, Conscience again thrust aside her mantle, and would have struck her victim with the envenomed dagger, only that he struggled, and clasped his hands before his heart. Even then, however, he sustained an ugly gash.

Why should we follow Fancy through the whole series of those awful pictures? Painted by an artist of wondrous power, and terrible acquaintance with the secret soul, they embodied the ghosts of all the never-perpetrated sins that had glided through the lifetime of Mr. Smith. And could such beings of cloudy fantasy, so near akin to nothingness, give valid evidence against him, at the day of judgment? Be that the case or not, there is reason to believe, that one truly penitential tear would have washed away each hateful picture, and left the canvas white as snow. But Mr. Smith, at a prick of Conscience too keen to be endured, bellowed aloud, with impatient agony, and suddenly discovered that his three guests were gone. There he sat alone, a silver-haired and highly venerated old man, in the rich gloom of the crimson-curtained room, with no box of pictures on the table, but only a decanter of most excellent Madeira. Yet his heart still seemed to fester with the venom of the dagger.

Nevertheless, the unfortunate old gentleman might have argued the matter with Conscience, and alleged many reasons wherefore she should not smite him so pitilessly. Were we to take up his cause, it should be somewhat in the following fashion. A scheme of guilt, till it be put in execution, greatly resembles a train of

incidents in a projected tale. The latter, in order to produce a sense of reality in the reader's mind, must be conceived with such proportionate strength by the author as to seem, in the glow of fancy, more like truth, past, present, or to come, than purely fiction. The prospective sinner, on the other hand, weaves his plot of crime, but seldom or never feels a perfect certainty that it will be executed. There is a dreaminess diffused about his thoughts; in a dream, as it were, he strikes the deathblow into his victim's heart, and starts to find an indelible blood stain on his hand. Thus a novel-writer, or a dramatist, in creating a villain of romance, and fitting him with evil deeds, and the villain of actual life, in projecting crimes that will be perpetrated, may almost meet each other half-way between reality and fancy. It is not until the crime is accomplished that guilt clenches its gripe upon the guilty heart and claims it for its own. Then, and not before, sin is actually felt and acknowledged, and, if unaccompanied by repentance, grows a thousandfold more virulent by its self-consciousness. Be it considered, also, that men often overestimate their capacity for evil. At a distance, while its attendant circumstances do not press upon their notice, and its results are dimly seen, they can bear to contemplate it. They may take the steps which lead to crime, impelled by the same sort of mental action as in working out a mathematical problem, yet be powerless with compunction at the final moment. They knew not what deed it was that they deemed themselves resolved to do. In truth, there is no such thing in man's nature as a settled and full resolve, either for good or evil, except at the very moment of execution. Let us hope, therefore, that all the dreadful consequences of sin will not be incurred unless the act have set its seal upon the thought.

Yet, with the slight fancy-work which we have framed, some sad and awful truths are interwoven. Man must not disclaim his brotherhood, even with the guiltiest, since, though his hand be clean, his heart has surely been polluted by the flitting phantoms of iniquity. He must

feel that when he shall knock at the gate of heaven, no semblance of an unspotted life can entitle him to entrance there. Penitence must kneel, and Mercy come from the footstool of the throne, or that golden gate will never open!

V. THOREAU. Henry David Thoreau, whose parents were of French descent, was born in 1817 in Connecticut, was graduated at Harvard and then settled at Concord. He was skillful in many ways, and by surveying a little, farming a little, making lead pencils and tailoring, he managed to supply himself with the necessities of his simple life and to leave the greater part of his time for thinking and writing. When he worked it was either that he might secure something to eat, something to wear, or that he might learn something from his work. When he found he could make the best of lead pencils he ceased to make them, because he had nothing more to learn in that art.

He was an intimate friend and disciple of Emerson, lived in his family for several years at different times, and was also a tutor in the family of Emerson's brother, where he was much loved and respected. He was not altogether a recluse, for he traveled about through the woods of Maine and Canada, into the White Mountains and through the Cape Cod region, sometimes alone and again with some friend, particularly Ellery Channing; but most of his eccentric life was spent in and about Concord, the Concord where Emerson, Hawthorne and the Alcotts lived, where in the earlier days the

colonial patriots had first openly withstood the troops of Great Britain. Here he wrote and published *Walden* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, the only books given to the public during his life-time, the remainder of the nine or ten volumes now in print having been selected from the voluminous diary he left to his friends. *Walden* is a circumstantial and at the same time earnest and poetical account of the period he spent in hermit-like retirement in a little shanty he built for himself on land owned by Emerson that bordered on Walden Pond, near Concord. Here he lived an abstemious life for nearly two years, cultivating a little patch of land, doing with his own hands all the menial labors necessary for his existence. He says that the house cost him \$28.12½, and that one summer he made from his gardening \$8.71½. These figures give us some idea of the paltriness of his labors and his great contempt for money and for what are called the comforts of life.

But if the wants of his body were few, the needs of his soul were many, and those years of seclusion and privation were years of growth whose fruit was one of the finest books of the language. His home was in a beautiful spot where the pines whispered their sweet music to his listening ears, and bright flowers, graceful vines and the cheery woodland songsters gladdened his watchful eyes. Beauty he saw in everything, and his were the keen, observant eyes of a trained naturalist. Everything in

nature had its lesson for him, and that lesson he was able to teach to any who have intelligence to read and the love of nature with which to interpret.

His life was a protest against the luxuries and mean vulgarity of those who have no high intellectual purpose in life. He felt that the only hope of reformation for the world was that individuals should reform, and in his perfect sincerity he tried to live up to his ideals, extravagant as they were, and he was royally sincere. He hated slavery with a bitter hatred, and because slavery was sanctioned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts he declined to pay his annual poll tax and was thrown into prison for his refusal. While there Emerson came to see the rugged old philosopher. "Why are you here?" asked the Sage of Concord. Thoreau drew himself up and replied, "Why are you *not* here?" Against the protest of the self-made martyr, Emerson paid the tax and Thoreau was released, declaring that he would never pay to the support of such a government. He kept his word, but friends regularly paid the tax for him, and he was not again molested.

It is not wise to dwell on what may be to some the repellent side of Thoreau's character. What concerns us is his contribution to literature, and in that we find ground for great satisfaction. His minute knowledge of nature and his loving portrayal of it, the charm of his quaint observations and the musical qualities of his style make the reading of his essays a

continual delight to those who have some understanding of the wild life of nature. He finds in the most unpromising subjects material for his pen, and these he treats in sentences and paragraphs that are models of artistic form. Take these examples from *Wild Apples*:

Near the beginning of May, we notice little thickets of apple-trees just springing up in the pastures where cattle have been,—as the rocky ones of our Easterbrooks country, or the top of Nobscot Hill, in Sudbury. One or two of these perhaps survive the drought and other accidents,—their very birthplace defending them against the encroaching grass and some other dangers, at first.

In two years' time 't had thus
Reached the level of the rocks,
Admired the stretching world,
Nor feared the wandering flocks.

But at this tender age
Its sufferings began:
There came a browsing ox
And cut it down a span.

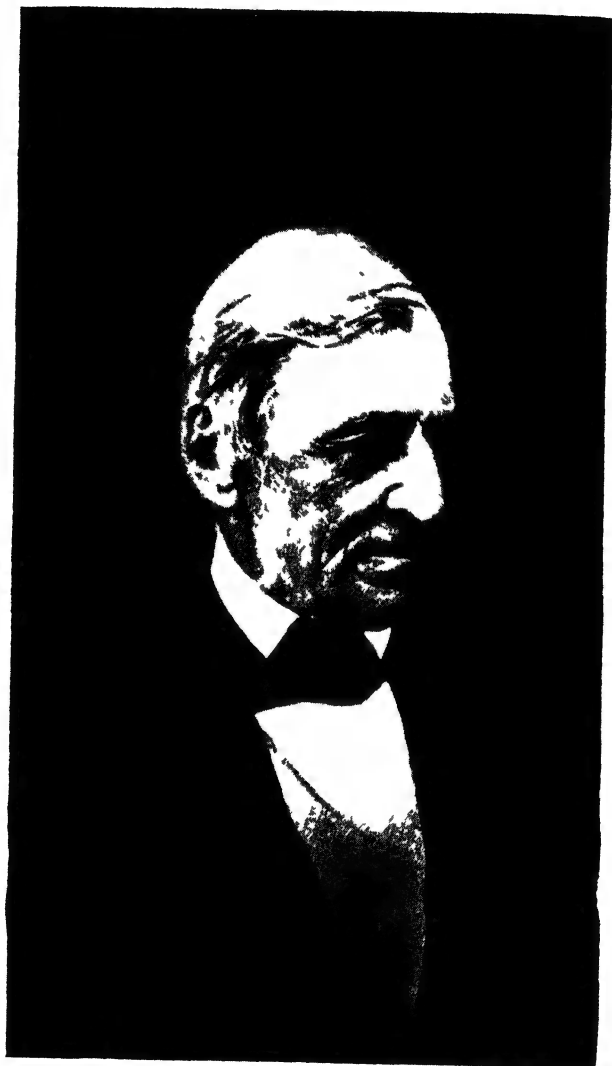
This time, perhaps, the ox does not notice it amid the grass; but the next year, when it has grown more stout, he recognizes it for a fellow-emigrant from the old country, the flavor of whose leaves and twigs he well knows; and though at first he pauses to welcome it, and express his surprise, and gets for answer, "The same cause that brought you here brought me," he nevertheless browses it again, reflecting, it may be, that he has some title to it.

Thus cut down annually, it does not despair; but, putting forth two short twigs for every one cut off, it spreads out low along the ground in the hollows or between the rocks, growing more stout and scrubby, until it forms, not a tree as yet, but a little pyramidal, stiff,

twiggy mass, almost as solid and impenetrable as a rock. Some of the densest and most impenetrable clumps of bushes that I have ever seen, as well on account of the closeness and stubbornness of their branches as of their thorns, have been these wild-apple scrubs. They are more like the scrubby fir and black spruce on which you stand, and sometimes walk on the tops of mountains, where cold is the demon they contend with, than anything else. No wonder they are prompted to grow thorns at last, to defend themselves against such foes. In their thorniness, however, there is no malice, only malic acid.

Thoreau died in 1862, and therefore failed to see the triumph of the anti-slavery party, which he had so vigorously supported. In considering his work, we must remember that his study of nature was occasioned by his instinctive appreciation of the beautiful, was, in fact, the poet's admiration and not the cold-blooded observation of the scientist. So he made the world no wiser by those systematic and prolonged studies that develop natural laws, but he left it happier for those who love to read.

VI. EMERSON. A man true to his convictions under all circumstances, a husband and father devoted to his family, a faithful friend deeply beloved by every one who knew him—such was Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), the poet and philosopher. Of the best New England blood, he was the product of generations of culture and scholarship. His father was poor and, dying when Emerson was but eight years old, left his family indigent, but the mother determined that this son, the second of five, should have a college education, and by hard



RALPH WALDO EMERSON
1803-1882

work and close economy on the part of both it was accomplished. In after years Emerson always regarded the severity of his self-denial as a valuable discipline and a considerable factor in his development.

He was graduated at eighteen, taught school for several years, was a clergyman for six years, and then gave up his calling because he could not conscientiously preach what he did not believe. At the age of thirty, on his return from a trip to Europe, he wrote in his diary :

The highest revelation is that God is in every man. Milton describes himself in his letter to Diodati as enamored of moral perfection. He did not love it more than I. That which I can not yet declare has been my angel from childhood until now. It has separated me from men. It has watered my pillow. It has driven sleep from my bed. It has tortured me for my guilt. It has inspired me with hope. It can not be defeated by my defeats. It can not be questioned, though all the martyrs apostatize. It is always the glory that shall be revealed, it is the "open secret" of the universe. And it is only the feebleness and dust of the observer that makes it the future; the whole is *now* potentially at the bottom of his heart. It is not a sufficient reply to the red and angry worldling, coloring as he affirms his unbelief, to say, "Think on living hereafter." I have to do no more than you with that question of another life. I believe in *this* life. I believe it continues. As long as I am here, I plainly read my duties as writ with pencil of fire. They speak not of death, they are woven of immortal thread.

This was the rule and guide of his life, and he followed it devoutly—followed the doctrine and led others with him, for it is the keynote of his philosophy.

Emerson lived at Concord, near the homes of the Alcotts, of Thoreau and of Hawthorne, in a plain, square, white house, shaded by a beautiful grove of elms. Here most of his writing was done and here his friends gathered about him. He was not an orator, but was an attractive and forcible speaker, of whom George William Curtis says:

It was not a sermon, nor an oration, nor an argument; it was the perfection of talk; the talk of a poet, of a philosopher, of a scholar. Its wit was a rapier, smooth, sharp, incisive, delicate, exquisite. The blade was pure as an icicle. You would have sworn that the hilt was diamond.

As a reformer, Emerson's work must not be underestimated. His faultless character and strong personality gave increased vitality to a doctrine that made no enemies except those who were too illiberal to consider the sincerity and truth of the man who advocated freedom of intellect and extolled the power of soul.

VII. EMERSON'S PROSE. Emerson cannot be called a philosopher in the sense that he evolved a system, originated great ideas or followed a long train of logical thought to inevitable conclusion; but no man ever existed who had greater power to stimulate others to think, to live and to act, and it is in this capacity that his great value to the world lies. In style Emerson is unique. No man ever possessed greater power in stating truths in beautiful and forcible language, in stating them so that they stick in the memory and convince the

reader of their verity. On the other hand, it seems quite impossible for him to preserve unity and logic in his writing throughout a single paragraph, much less through an entire essay; yet for those who read and study carefully there is a continuity of thought and a general unity which are not consciously violated, tenuous as at times they may appear. In his essays and his lectures, which are little more than spoken essays, he touches upon an inconceivable number of subjects and gives utterance to a vast body of truths in most convincing form. The thoughtful reader will not often pass a page without feeling the thrill of Emerson's extraordinary thought, but for the casual reader his message is not plain nor his meaning always evident, for which reason there is a falling off in the extreme popularity which he enjoyed during his life and for the decade immediately following his death.

Emerson's philosophy is the embodiment of Transcendentalism at its best, but he was never led into the Brook Farm experiment and always preserved a canny regard for himself that indicates the shrewd Yankee who stood back of the retiring, thoughtful philosopher. This double nature, if so it may be called, reflects itself in his writings, for there is running through them all a vein of practical common-sense in everyday affairs that is no less stimulating than his philosophical dreaminess. To attempt to cover Emerson's philosophy even in a single volume would result only in

failure. We can merely glance at some phases of it.

In 1841 Emerson's first volume of *Essays*, containing *History, Self-Reliance, Compensation, Spiritual Laws, Love, Friendship, Prudence, Heroism, The Oversoul, Circles, Intellect and Art*, was published, and in them may be found the best of his idealism and the conclusions of his deepest thought. "Vague," "extravagant," "meaningless" were words the unthinking and unseeing critics hurled against these essays, but it is doubtful if any book ever awakened more thought or produced greater effects upon thinking men than this same volume of essays. Nor did Emerson himself ever excel them. When one has mastered the contents of this group of essays, he has mastered Emerson. In *Self-Reliance* he eloquently urges mankind to trust its own convictions, to shake off all bondage, intellectual and spiritual alike, and to be true to its own thought. As an introduction he quotes the following lines from Beaumont and Fletcher:

Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and perfect man
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

His essay is an enlargement on the theme, and as an example of his style we can do no better than to quote the following, though, taken by itself, it is not representative of the essay:

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates; that the soul *becomes*; for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present, there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever blessed One. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which can not help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the in-

truding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I have all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—“Come out unto us.” But keep thy state; come not into their conclusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. “What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love.”

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, “O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have

lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by my hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last."—But so you may give these friends pain. Yes, but I can not sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

From the essay on *Art*, which, by the way, is not all that Emerson has to say upon that subject, the following extracts are taken:

The office of painting and sculpture seems to be merely initial. The best pictures can easily tell us their last secret. The best pictures are rude draughts of a few of the miraculous dots and lines and dyes which make up the ever-changing "landscape with figures" amidst

which we dwell. Painting seems to be to the eye what dancing is to the limbs. When that has educated the frame to self-possession, to nimbleness, to grace, the steps of the dancing-master are better forgotten; so painting teaches me the splendor of color and the expression of form, and as I see many pictures and higher genius in the art, I see the boundless opulence of the pencil, the indifferency in which the artist stands free to choose out of the possible forms. If he can draw everything, why draw anything? and then is my eye opened to the eternal picture which nature paints in the street, with moving men and children, beggars and fine ladies, draped in red and green and blue and gray; long-haired, grizzled, white-faced, black-faced, wrinkled, giant, dwarf, expanded, elfish,—capped and based by heaven, earth, and sea.

A gallery of sculpture teaches more austere the same lesson. As picture teaches the coloring, so sculpture the anatomy of form. When I have seen fine statues and afterwards enter a public assembly, I understand well what he meant who said, "When I have been reading Homer, all men look like giants." I too see that painting and sculpture are gymnastics of the eye, training to the niceties and curiosities of its function. There is no statue like this living man, with his infinite advantage over all ideal sculpture, of perpetual variety. What a gallery of art have I here! No mannerist made these varied groups and diverse original single figures. Here is the artist himself improvising, grim and glad, at his block. Now one thought strikes him, now another, and with each moment he alters the whole air, attitude, and expression of his clay. Away with your nonsense of oil and easels, of marble and chisels: except to open your eyes to the witchcraft of eternal art, they are hypocritical rubbish.

I now require this of all pictures, that they domesticate me, not that they dazzle me. Pictures must not be too picturesque. Nothing astonishes men so much as

common sense and plain dealing. All great actions have been simple, and all great pictures are.

The *Transfiguration*, by Raphael, is an eminent example of this peculiar merit. A calm benignant beauty shines over all this picture, and goes directly to the heart. It seems almost to call you by name. The sweet and sublime face of Jesus is beyond praise, yet how it disappoints all florid expectations! This familiar, simple, home-speaking countenance is as if one should meet a friend. The knowledge of picture-dealers has its value, but listen not to their criticism when your heart is touched by genius. It was not painted for them, it was painted for you; for such as had eyes capable of being touched by simplicity and lofty emotions.

Representative Men appeared first in 1850, and consists of a series of lectures which he had delivered in a successful course in England. *Man, the Reformer*, one of his most notable lectures, had been previously given, as well as that great "declaration of intellectual independence," *The American Scholar*, which was the Phi Beta Kappa address of 1837. Even a casual acquaintance with Emerson cannot be obtained except by reading the lectures we have mentioned, and to them we recommend our readers with a certainty that they will find their time well spent.

VIII. EMERSON'S POETRY. The real admirer of Emerson will rank him high among the poets, although the volume of his productions is both relatively and actually small; but there are those who find in his metrical lines, with a few conspicuous exceptions only, versified reprints of his essays or lyrics that lack fire and

beauty. Nevertheless, we have from his pen some exquisite things, and those we may accept without considering the wearisomeness of others or the obscurity and profundity of still a third group. For instance, there is *Threnody*, the fine elegy in which Emerson pours out his grief at the death of his little four-year-old son Waldo. From it the following extract is taken :

O child of paradise,
Boy who made dear his father's home,
In whose deep eyes
Men read the welfare of the times to come,
I am too much bereft.
The world dishonored thou hast left.
O truth's and Nature's costly lie!
O trusted broken prophecy!
O richest fortune sourly crossed!
Born for the future, to the future lost!

The deep Heart answered, "Weepest thou?
Worthier cause for passion wild
If I had not taken the child.
And deemest thou as those who pore,
With aged eyes, short way before,—
Think'st Beauty vanished from the coast
Of matter, and thy darling lost?
Taught he not thee—the man of eld,
Whose eyes within his eyes beheld
Heaven's numerous hierarchy span
The mystic gulf from God to man?
To be alone wilt thou begin,
When worlds of lovers hem thee in?
To-morrow, when the masks shall fall
That dizen Nature's carnival,
The pure shall see by their own will,
Which overflowing Love shall fill,

'Tis not within the force of fate
The fate-conjoined to separate.
But thou, my votary, weepest thou?
I gave thee sight—where is it now?
I taught thy heart beyond the reach
Of ritual, Bible, or of speech;
Wrote in thy mind's transparent table,
As far as the incommunicable;
Taught thee each private sign to raise
Lit by the supersolar blaze.
Past utterance, and past belief,
And past the blasphemy of grief,
The mysteries of Nature's heart;
And though no Muse can these impart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.

"I came to thee as to a friend;
Dearest, to thee I did not send
Tutors, but a joyful eye,
Innocence that matched the sky,
Lovely locks, a form of wonder,
Laughter rich as woodland thunder,
That thou might'st entertain apart
The richest flowering of all art:
And, as the great all-loving Day
Through smallest chambers takes its way,
That thou might'st break thy daily bread
With prophet, savior, and head;
That thou might'st cherish for thine own
The richest of sweet Mary's Son,
Boy-Rabbi, Israel's paragon.
And thoughtest thou such guest
Would in thy hall take up his rest?
Would rushing life forget her laws,
Fate's glowing revolution pause?
High omens ask diviner guess;
Not to be conned to tediousness.
And know my higher gifts unbind

The zone that girds the incarnate mind.
When the scanty shores are full
With thought's perilous, whirling pool;
When frail Nature can no more,
Then the Spirit strikes the hour:
My servant Death, with solving rite,
Pours finite into infinite.
Wilt thou freeze love's tidal flow,
Whose streams through Nature circling go?
Nail the wild star to its track
On the half climbed zodiac?

“Light is light which radiates,
Blood is blood which circulates,
Life is life which generates,
And many-seeming life is one,—
Wilt thou transfix and make it none?
Its onward force too starkly pent
In figure, bone, and lineament?
Wilt thou, uncalled, interrogate,—
Talker!—the unreplying Fate?
Nor see the genius of the whole
Ascendant in the private soul?
Beckon it when to go and come,
Self-announced its hour of doom?
Fair the soul's recess and shrine,
 Magic-built to last a season;
Masterpiece of love benign,
 Fairer that expansive reason
Whose omen 'tis, and sign.
Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
Verdict which accumulates
From lengthening scroll of human fates,
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned,—
Saying, *What is excellent,*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;

Heart's love will meet thee again.
Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye
Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
Not of adamant and gold
Built he heaven stark and cold;
No, but a nest of bending reeds,
Flowering grass and scented weeds;
Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims;
Built of furtherance and pursuing,
Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
Silent rushes the swift Lord
Through ruined systems still restored,
Broad-sowing, bleak and void to bless,
Plants with worlds the wilderness;
Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.
House and tenant go to ground.
Lost in God, in Godhead found."

More distinctly Emersonian is *Each and All*:

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,

For I did not bring home the river and sky ;—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
The delicate shells lay on the shore ;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home ;
But the poor unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.
The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed,
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage ;
The gay enchantment was undone—
A gentle wife, but fairy none.
Then I said, "I covet truth :
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat ;
I leave it behind with the games of youth :"—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs ;
I inhaled the violet's breath ;
Around me stood the oaks and firs ;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground ;
Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity ;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird :—
Beauty through my senses stole ;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

The well-known *Concord Hymn*, which was sung at the completion of the Battle Monument, April 19, 1836, follows :

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

In an entirely different vein and one which shows Emerson's appreciation of nature as well as his wealth of descriptive power and elegance of phraseology, is *The Humble-Bee*:

Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;

Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,—
Thou in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace,
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me, thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound,
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.
Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
 Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
 Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.



"THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES"



CHAPTER XXXII

AMERICAN WRITERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA (CONTINUED)

THE ANTI-SLAVERY GROUP

THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT. The Transcendental movement dealt with ideals, and, as we have seen, most of its ardent advocates were rather impractical and accomplished no evident, lasting reform. They had their influence upon thought, and doubtless have advanced the moral standard of many people, but to say that Transcendentalism is responsible for any great change in American activities is attaching too much importance to it. However, the truth-seeking spirit which prompted it did lead to a revolution in feeling and a reform in government that succeeded finally only at the expense of thousands of lives and untold suffering.

At a much earlier date Channing had written:

There is one object here which always depresses me. It is *slavery*. This alone would prevent me from ever settling in Virginia. Language cannot express my detestation of it. Master and slave! Nature never made such a distinction, or established such a relation. Man, when forced to substitute the will of another for his own, ceases to be a moral agent; his title to the name of man is extinguished, he becomes a mere machine in the hands of his oppressor. No empire is so valuable as the empire of oneself. No right is so inseparable from humanity, and so necessary to the improvement of our species, as the right of exerting the powers which nature has given us in the pursuit of any and of every good which we can obtain without doing injury to others. Should you desire it, I will give you some idea of the situation and character of the negroes in Virginia. It is a subject so degrading to humanity that I cannot dwell on it with pleasure. I should be obliged to show you every vice, heightened by every meanness and added to every misery. The influence of slavery on the whites is almost as fatal as on the blacks themselves.

This opinion was not general even in Boston, for originally slavery was universal in the colonies, and it was only in the course of years and because of the unprofitableness of slave labor that the institution died out in the North. Long after slaves ceased to be held in Massachusetts the people believed slavery to be right, basing their judgment largely upon the feeling that slaves were property and that neither public sentiment nor governmental authority should be allowed to interfere in such personal rights as were given by the ownership of prop-

erty. Accordingly, to advocate abolition was to bring upon oneself the odium of popular disapproval and a social ostracism we can now scarcely credit.

II. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON AND THE NEW ENGLAND ORATORS. There were certain leaders, however, who saw the vital fault in the argument that human beings could be subject to property rights and who fearlessly advocated personal freedom for the black. Chief among these was William Lloyd Garrison, who in 1831, when he was about twenty-six years old, founded the *Liberator*. This absolutely sincere man, fanatic though he was, persisted in the publication of his newspaper, always a radical advocate for abolition, till after the close of the Civil War. He lived to see the nation regarding him as the great popular hero of the day and glorying in the reform he had done so much to produce.

Representing the same trend of thought, conscious of the rectitude of their own intentions but bitterly intolerant of the equally sincere ideas of their opponents, were the three great New England orators, Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner. The first was a minister, a graduate of Harvard and one of the most celebrated scholars of the day. Unitarian and Transcendentalist as he was, he was gifted also with the nature of a practical reformer, and his passionate eloquence was consecrated to an unflinching advocacy of abolition. He never wavered, was

uncompromising, and his bitter invectives often drove away the wavering rather than attracted them to his cause. He died at Florence, where he had gone to regain his health, just before the terrible conflict that was to result in the fruition of his hopes.

Phillips and Sumner both lived to see the liberation of the slaves, and the latter was a distinguished figure in the national capital before and after the war. The oratory of Phillips was polished and refined, and while it often seemed to lack the passionate sincerity of Parker it was scholarly and artistic and possessed that power of winning the sympathy of his audience which was lacking in the speech of the New England divine. Parker and Sumner were Harvard men, and both from the more cultured class. Different as they were, they had one trait in common—a violence and license in speech that often degenerated into personal abuse. For an attack of this sort on a South Carolina senator, Sumner was almost killed in the Senate Chamber at Washington.

Though the powerful oratory of these men exerted its tremendous influence upon the period, it is hardly just to call their speeches literature; yet there are passages of great literary excellence in the work of each. When men have a specific purpose in view, their utterance, however forcible and influential, is not apt long to outlive the epoch for which it was intended.

The following extract on *Christianity* is taken from *A Discourse Pertaining to Matters*

of Religion, and is included not only for its sentiment but as an excellent example of Parker's eloquence:

Christianity came to the world in the darkness of the nations; they had outgrown their old form, and looked for a new. They stood in the shadow of darkness, fearing to look back nor daring to look forward; they groped after God. Christianity came to the nations as a beam of light shot into chaos; a strain of sweet music—so silvery and soft we know not we are listening—to him who wanders on amid the uncertain gloom, and charms him to the light, to the River of God and Tree of Life. It was the fulfillment of the prophecy of holy hearts. It is human religion, human morality, and above all things reveals the greatness of man.

It is sometimes feared that Christianity is in danger; that its days are numbered. Of the Christianity of the church, no doubt it is true. That child of many fathers cannot die too soon. It cumbers the ground. But the Christianity of Christ, absolute religion, absolute morality, cannot perish: never till love, goodness, devotion, faith, reason, fail from the heart of man; never till God melts away and vanishes, and nothing takes the place of the All-in-All. Religion can no more be separated from the race than thought and feeling; nor absolute religion die out more than wisdom perish from among men. Man's words, thoughts, churches, fail and pass off like clouds from the sky that leave no track behind. But God's word can never change. It shines perennial like the stars. Its testimony is in man's heart. None can outgrow it; none destroy. For eighteen hundred years the Christianity of Christ has been in the world to warn and encourage. Violence and cunning, allies of sin, have opposed it. Every weapon learning could snatch from the arsenals of the past, or science devise anew, or pride and cruelty and wit invent, has been used by mistaken man to destroy this fabric. Not a stone has fallen from the heavenly arch of real religion; not a loop-hole been found

where a shot could enter. But alas, vain doctrines, follies, absurdities without count, have been plied against the temple of God, marring its beauteous shape. That Christianity continues to live—spite of the traditions, fables, doctrines wrapped about it—is proof enough of its truth. Reason never warred against love of God and man, never with the Christianity of Christ, but always with that of the church. There is much destructive work still to be done, which scoffers will attempt.

Can man destroy absolute religion? He cannot with all the arts and armies of the world destroy the pigment that colors an emmet's eye. He may obscure the truth to his own mind. But it shines forever unchanged. So boys of a summer's day throw dust above their heads to blind the sun; they only hide it from their blinded eyes.

Phillips has left two lectures on subjects not related directly to the abolition movement, which continue to be deservedly popular. The first, on *The Lost Arts*, is so plausible, so eloquent and so refined a production that the reader never questions the truth of the cunningly devised fictions that pass as facts. The second is his remarkable lecture, *Toussaint l'Ouverture*, delivered in 1861. The famous negro liberator of Haiti subsequently died in a French prison, but of his character the following extract speaks for itself:

He had been born a slave on a plantation in the north of the island,—an unmixed negro,—his father stolen from Africa. If anything, therefore, that I say of him to-night moves your admiration, remember, the black race claims it all,—we have no part nor lot in it. He was fifty years old at this time. An old negro had taught him to read. His favorite books were Epictetus, Raynal, military memoirs, Plutarch. In the woods he learned some of the qualities of herbs; and was village doctor.

On the estate, the highest place he ever reached was that of coachman. At fifty he joined the army as physician. Before he went, he placed his master and mistress on ship-board, freighted the vessel with a cargo of sugar and coffee, and sent them to Baltimore; and never afterward did he forget to send them, year by year, ample means of support. And I might add, that of all the leading negro generals, each one saved the man under whose roof he was born, and protected the family.

Let me add another thing. If I stood here to-night to tell the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I here to tell you the story of Washington, I should take it from your hearts,—you, who think no marble white enough on which to carve the name of the Father of his Country, I am about to tell you the story of a negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards,—men who despised him as a negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in many a battle. All the materials for his biography are from the lips of his enemies.

The second story told of him is this: About the time he reached the camp, the army had been subjected to two insults. First, their commissioners, summoned to meet the French Committee, were ignominiously and insultingly dismissed; and when afterward François, their general, was summoned to a second conference, and went to it on horseback, accompanied by two officers, a young lieutenant, who had known him as a slave, angered at seeing him in the uniform of an officer, raised his riding-whip and struck him over the shoulders. If he had been the savage which the negro is painted to us, he had only to breathe the insult to his twenty-five thousand soldiers, and they would have trodden out the Frenchmen in blood. But the indignant chief rode back in silence to his tent, and it was twenty-four hours before his troops heard of this insult to their general. Then the word

went forth, "Death to every white man!" They had fifteen hundred prisoners. Ranged in front of the camp, they were about to be shot. Toussaint, who had a vein of religious fanaticism, like most great leaders,—like Mohammed, like Napoleon, like Cromwell, like John Brown, he could preach as well as fight,—mounting a hillock, and getting the ear of the crowd, exclaimed:—"Brothers, this blood will not wipe out the insult to our chief; only the blood in yonder French camp can wipe it out. To shed that is courage; to shed this is cowardice and cruelty besides;"—and he saved fifteen hundred lives.

I cannot stop to give in detail every one of his efforts. This was in 1793. Leap with me over seven years; come to 1800: what has he achieved? He has driven the Spaniard back into his own cities, conquered him there, and put the French banner over every Spanish town; and for the first time, and almost the last, the island obeys one law. He has put the mulatto under his feet. He has attacked Maitland, defeated him in pitched battles, and permitted him to retreat to Jamaica; and when the French army rose upon Laveaux, their general, and put him in chains, Toussaint defeated them, took Laveaux out of prison, and put him at the head of his own troops. The grateful French in return named him general-in-chief. "*Cet homme fait l'ouverture partout*" (This man makes an opening everywhere) said one; hence his soldiers named him "*L'Ouverture*" (the opening).

This was the work of seven years. Let us pause a moment, and find something to measure him by. You remember Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army till he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty-seven was placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with

such disadvantages the Englishman showed the greater genius. Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to Toussaint. Cromwell never saw an army till he was forty: this man never saw a soldier till he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army—out of what? Englishmen, the best blood in Europe; out of the middle class of Englishmen, the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered—what? Englishmen, their equals. This man manufactured his army—out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed, and as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt and hurled it at—what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica. Now if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier. I know it was a small territory; it was not as large as the continent: but it was as large as that Attica, which with Athens for a capital has filled the earth with its fame for two thousand years. We measure genius by quality, not by quantity.

Further,—Cromwell was only a soldier; his fame stops there. Not one line in the statute-book of Britain can be traced to Cromwell; not one step in the social life of England finds its motive power in his brain. The State he founded went down with him to his grave. But this man no sooner put his hand on the helm of State than the ship steadied with an upright keel, and he began to evince a statesmanship as marvelous as his military genius. History says that the most statesmanlike act of Napoleon was his proclamation of 1802, at the peace of Amiens, when, believing that the indelible loyalty of a native-born heart is always a sufficient basis on which

to found an empire, he said: "Frenchmen, come home. I pardon the crimes of the last twelve years; I blot out its parties; I found my throne on the hearts of all Frenchmen;"—and twelve years of unclouded success showed how wisely he judged. That was in 1802. In 1800 this negro made a proclamation; it runs thus: "Sons of St. Domingo, come home. We never meant to take your houses or your lands. The negro only asked that liberty which God gave him. Your houses wait for you; your lands are ready; come and cultivate them;"—and from Madrid and Paris, from Baltimore and New Orleans, the emigrant planters crowded home to enjoy their estates, under the pledged word, that was never broken, of a victorious slave.

Again, Carlyle has said, "The natural king is one who melts all wills into his own." At this moment he turned to his armies,—poor, ill-clad, and half-starved,—and said to them: "Go back and work on these estates you have conquered; for an empire can be founded only on order and industry, and you can learn these virtues only there." And they went. The French admiral, who witnessed the scene, said that in a week his army melted back into peasants.

It was 1800. The world waited fifty years before, in 1846, Robert Peel dared to venture, as a matter of practical statesmanship, the theory of free trade. Adam Smith theorized, the French statesmen dreamed, but no man at the head of affairs had ever dared to risk it as a practical measure. Europe waited till 1846 before the most practical intellect in the world, the English, adopted the great economic formula of unfettered trade. But in 1800 this black, with the instinct of statesmanship, said to the committee who were drafting for him a constitution: "Put at the head of the chapter of commerce that the ports of St. Domingo are open to the trade of the world." With lofty indifference to race, superior to all envy or prejudice, Toussaint had formed this committee of eight white proprietors and one mulatto,—not a soldier nor a negro on the list; although Haytian his-

tory proves that with the exception of Rigaud, the rarest genius has always been shown by pure negroes.

Again, it was 1800, at a time when England was poisoned on every page of her statute-book with religious intolerance, when a man could not enter the House of Commons without taking an Episcopal communion, when every State in the Union except Rhode Island was full of the intensest religious bigotry. This man was a negro. You say that is a superstitious blood. He was uneducated. You say that makes a man narrow-minded. He was a Catholic. Many say that is but another name for intolerance. And yet—negro, Catholic, slave—he took his place by the side of Roger Williams, and said to his committee: “Make it the first line of my Constitution that I know no difference between religious beliefs.”

Now, blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race, go back with me to the commencement of the century, and select what statesman you please. Let him be either American or European; let him have a brain the result of six generations of culture; let him have the ripest training of university routine; let him add to it the better education of practical life; crown his temples with the silver of seventy years,—and show me the man of Saxon lineage for whom his most sanguine admirer will wreath a laurel rich as embittered foes have placed on the brow of this negro: rare military skill, profound knowledge of human nature, content to blot out all party distinctions and trust a State to the blood of its sons,—anticipating Sir Robert Peel fifty years, and taking his station by the side of Roger Williams before any Englishman or American had won the right;—and yet this is the record which the history of rival States makes up for this inspired black of St. Domingo.

III. “UNCLE TOM’S CABIN.” That which perhaps more than any other single thing aided in creating among the masses a sentiment against slavery was a novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cab-*

in, written for a distinct purpose, but which preserved its vitality long after the events which called it into being had passed into history.

Mrs. Stowe, a sister of Henry Ward Beecher, the eminent divine, was the wife of a professor in Bowdoin College, and though burdened by the cares of a family she saw in the condition of the black race in the South a theme that moved her passionately. The result was a novel which, in spite of its prejudices, exaggerations and literary faults, is an artistic creation, a vivid picture of human misery lightened now and then by pleasing rays of sympathy and affection. The book, published in 1852, had a remarkable influence that was not confined to America, for the novel was translated into twenty languages, and millions of copies were sold. Everywhere the reading of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* left behind it a conviction of the horror of slavery and a determination that some prohibitive action must be taken.

Mrs. Stowe wrote other novels, and were its fame not eclipsed by *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, her *Old Town Folks* would have gained her an enviable reputation, for its pictures of certain types of New England character are quite as apt and true to life as those of her more famous work.

IV. WHITTIER. A favorite American, an ardent anti-slavery crusader, a painstaking and intelligent public servant, was John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892), the son of a New Eng-

land farmer and a Quaker by faith. Born in the same year with Longfellow, Whittier had none of the advantages of early education which the more popular, if less virile, poet possessed, but in the happy farmhouse, of which he has given us so vivid a picture in his *Snowbound*, he gained his first knowledge, and first felt a love for literature from reading such books as the Bible, *The Journals of Early Friends*, the poems of Burns and *The Arabian Nights*. Whittier began versifying while he was quite young, but his natural timidity prevented him from bringing his juvenile efforts before the public until a sister sent some of them to a neighboring newspaper, whose editor, the famous William Lloyd Garrison, saw their merit, called upon the bashful youth, and urged more schooling for him. The young man, by dint of hard work, subsequently succeeded in spending a year in an academy and at twenty-one in obtaining an editorial position in Boston. Yet, it was not until 1866, when the sales of *Snowbound* brought him a competence, that Whittier knew what it was to live in undisturbed comfort.

His was an uneventful life, made even more quiet and retiring by the poor health which shut him out from many of the activities in which he wished to engage. He never married, and was painfully shy and reticent in company, though with the improved health of later years came more of self-confidence, and he allowed himself to be brought more before the public.



JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER
1807-1892

His manners were engaging and he always appeared to advantage, even while conforming strictly to the beliefs of his sect in the constant cut of his coat.

He was not a highly educated man, he traveled but little, was never in Europe, and spoke no language but his own. In consequence of this his poetry is not filled with the scholarly allusions for which Lowell is noted, nor is it as refined and polished as that of Bryant or Longfellow. He demonstrates that lineage and highly cultivated ancestry are not essential to the world of letters. The defects of his early education rarely show, and errors in his verse are so infrequent that they attract little attention. The perfect simplicity of all he wrote is its greatest charm, as though he knew it was not his place to soar, but that his niche was near to the hearts of his people, in the simple American home.

An active politician, unswerving in his devotion to his principles, he made his share of enemies in the exciting days of the slavery struggle, but he performed his duties as a writer and as a member of the Massachusetts legislature with such evident conscientiousness that his most active opponents respected and admired his character.

The labor of his life, at least the one nearest to his heart, consisted in his activities for the liberation of the slaves, and by his writings he was one of the leading instruments in creating the sentiment which finally became overpower-

ing in the North. Throughout the Civil War he was actively engaged in politics as well as in writing poetry, with the same courageous disregard of self that he had manifested in earlier days, when the anti-slavery movement was excessively unpopular everywhere. Toward the close of the war, however, he suffered the greatest loss of his life in the death of his sister, Elizabeth Whittier, the loving companion whom he has immortalized in *Snowbound*.

V. THE POEMS OF WHITTIER. It is difficult for the fair-minded critic to place either Whittier or Longfellow among the really great poets of the world, if one is to scrutinize their work with an unsparing eye; but their hold upon the people is great, and if popularity and affection are an evidence of greatness, then both deserve an extraordinarily high rank. Whittier's work shows many technical defects, but the occasional nature of much of his work and the destruction of slavery which rendered more of it pointless to the present generation, enable the reader to set aside a great number of poems as not belonging to real literature. However, after these are taken away and those others which fail to rise to lyric height, there are still left some songs and one great poem that will never be forgotten. What Burns did for the Scotch peasant in *The Cotter's Saturday Night* and what Goldsmith accomplished for the English peasants in the pictures of *The Deserted Village*, Whittier has done in a much more charming manner for the New England

farmer. *Snowbound* is a poem of home; it is the glowing testimony of son and brother to the love and happiness which abounded in the warmth of his childhood fireside. By the magic of his pen, no less wonderful than the supernal powers of the lamp he yearned to possess in his childhood, he has brought the family to our hearts as though we, too, had shared their joys and their sorrows. There may be and doubtless are defects in this great idyl, but there are phrases of matchless beauty and one lyric at least that should never be forgotten.

Father and mother, the sisters, the uncle, the schoolmaster and other guests who gathered around the glowing hearth have gone, and only one brother remains alive. It is the affection surviving death, tinctured by the sense of deep and irreparable loss, that wrings the poet's heart:

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,

Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the path their feet have worn,
 We sit beneath their orchard trees,
 We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
 Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
 No step is on the conscious floor.

But seer and poet as he is, his sadness is tempered by his faith, and in confident expectation of a reunion he voices his trust and showers his pity on those to whom death seems final extinction:

Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
 The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
 And Love can never lose its own!

Maud Muller, a pastoral, and *Barbara Frichtie*, one of his war poems, are so well known that they need no mention, while *Skipper Ireson's Ride*, *The Angels of Buena Vista* and a number of others are little less popular. Among the ballads, one of the best is *Barclay of Ury*, concerning which Whittier has made the following statements:

Among the earliest converts to the doctrines of Friends in Scotland was Barclay of Ury, an old and distinguished soldier, who had fought under Gustavus Adolphus in Germany. As a Quaker, he became the object of persecution and abuse at the hands of the magistrates and the populace. None bore the indignities of the mob with greater patience and nobleness of soul than this once proud gentleman and soldier. One of his friends, on an occasion of uncommon rudeness, lamented that he should be treated so harshly in his old age who had been so honored before. "I find more satisfaction," said Barclay, "as well as honor, in being thus insulted for my religious principles, than when, a few years ago, it was usual for the magistrates, as I passed the city of Aberdeen, to meet me on the road and conduct me to public entertainment in their hall, and then escort me out again, to gain my favor."

The poem itself follows:

Up the streets of Aberdeen,
By the kirk and college green,
Rode the Laird of Ury;
Close behind him, close beside,
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed
Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,
Jeered at him the serving-girl,
Prompt to please her master;
And the begging carlin, late
Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,
Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet with calm and stately mien,
Up the streets of Aberdeen
Came he slowly riding:
And, to all he saw and heard,
Answering not with bitter word,
Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broadswords swinging,
Bits and bridles sharply ringing,

Loose and free and froward:
Quoth the foremost, "Ride him down!
Push him! prick him! through the town
Drive the Quaker coward!"

But from out the thickening crowd
Cried a sudden voice and loud:

"Barelay! Ho! a Barelay!"
And the old man at his side
Saw a comrade, battle tried,
Scarred and sunburned darkly;

Who with ready weapon bare,
Fronting to the troopers there,
Cried aloud: "God save us,
Call ye coward him who stood
Ankle deep in Lutzen's blood,
With the brave Gustavus?"

"Nay, I do not need thy sword,
Comrade mine," said Ury's lord;

"Put it up, I pray thee:
Passive to his holy will,
Trust I in my Master still,
Even though he slay me.

"Pledges of thy love and faith,
Proved on many a field of death,
Not by me are needed."
Marveled much that henchman bold,
That his laird, so stout of old,
Now so meekly pleaded.

"Woe's the day!" he sadly said,
With a slowly shaking head,
And a look of pity;
Ury's honest lord reviled,
Mock of knave and sport of child,
In his own good city!

“Speak the word, and, master mine,
As we charged on Tilly’s line,
And his Walloon lancers,
Smiting through their midst we’ll teach
Civil look and decent speech
To these boyish prancers!”

“Marvel not, mine ancient friend,
Like beginning, like the end:”

Quoth the Laird of Ury,
“Is the sinful servant more
Than his gracious Lord who bore
Bonds and stripes in Jewry?”

“Give me joy that in his name
I can bear, with patient frame,
All these vain ones offer;
While for them He suffereth long,
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,
Scoffing with the scoffer?”

“Happier I, with loss of all,
Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,
With few friends to greet me,
Than when reeve and squire were seen,
Riding out from Aberdeen,
With bared heads to meet me.

“When each good wife, o’er and o’er,
Blessed me as I passed her door;
And the snooded daughter,
From her casement glancing down,
Smiled on him who bore renown
From red fields of slaughter.

“Hard to feel the stranger’s scoff,
Hard the old friends’ falling off,
Hard to learn forgiving:
But the Lord his own rewards,
And his love with theirs accords,
Warm and fresh and living.

“Through this dark and stormy night
Faith beholds a feeble light
Up the blackness streaking;
Knowing God’s own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest
For the full day-breaking!”

So the Laird of Ury said,
Turning slow his horse’s head
Towards the Tolbooth prison,
Where, through iron grates, he heard
Poor disciples of the Word
Preach of Christ arisen!

Not in vain, Confessor old,
Unto us the tale is told
Of thy day of trial;
Every age on him, who strays
From its broad and beaten ways,
Pours its sevenfold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear
Angel comfortings can hear,
O’er the rabble’s laughter;
And while Hatred’s fagots burn,
Glimpses through the smoke discern
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet
Share of Truth was vainly set
In the World’s wide fallow;
After hands shall sow the seed,
After hands from hill and mead
Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,
Must the moral pioneer
From the Future borrow;
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,
And, on midnight’s sky of rain,
Paint the golden morrow!

John Tauler was born at Strasburg toward the close of the thirteenth century and became one of the most prominent of medieval German mystics. An eloquent preacher, his words "came home to the heart of both high and low, spreading light everywhere, and justly procuring for him the title of *Doctor Illuminatus*." Here follows Whittier's poem *Tauler*, given in full:

Tauler, the preacher, walked, one autumn day,
Without the walls of Strasburg by the Rhine,
Pondering the solemn Miracle of Life;
As one who, wandering in the starless night,
Feels, momentarily, the jar of unseen waves,
And hears the thunder of an unknown sea,
Breaking along an unimagined shore.

And as he walked he prayed. Even the same
Old prayer with which, for half a score of years,
Morning, and noon, and evening, lip and heart
Had groaned: "Have pity upon me, Lord!
Thou seest, while teaching others, I am blind.
Send me a man who can direct my steps!"

Then, as he mused, he heard along his path
A sound as of an old man's staff among
The dry, dead linden-leaves; and, looking up,
He saw a stranger, weak, and poor, and old.

"Peace be unto thee, father!" Tauler said,
"God give thee a good day!" The old man raised
Slowly his calm blue eyes. "I thank thee, son;
But *all* my days are good, and none are ill."
Wondering thereat, the preacher spake again,
"God give thee happy life." The old man smiled,
"I never am unhappy."

Tauler laid

His hand upon the stranger's coarse gray sleeve :

"Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean.

Surely man's days are evil, and his life

Sad as the grave it leads to." "Nay, my son,

Our times are in God's hands, and all our days

Are as our needs ; for shadow as for sun,

For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike

Our thanks are due, since that is best which is ;

And that which is not, sharing not his life,

Is evil only as devoid of good.

And for the happiness of which I spake,

I find it in submission to his will,

And calm trust in the holy Trinity

Of Knowledge, Goodness, and Almighty Power."

Silently wondering, for a little space,

Stood the great preacher, then he spake as one

Who, suddenly grappling with a haunting thought

Which long has followed, whispering through the dark

Strange terrors, drags it, shrieking, into light ;

"What if God's will consign thee hence to Hell?"

"Then," said the stranger cheerily, "be it so.

What Hell may be I know not ; this I know,—

I cannot lose the presence of the Lord :

One arm, Humility, takes hold upon

His dear Humanity ; the other, Love,

Clasps his Divinity. So where I go

He goes ; and better fire-walled Hell with Him

Than golden-gated Paradise without."

Tears sprang in Tauler's eyes. A sudden light,

Like the first ray which fell on chaos, clove

Apart the shadow wherein he had walked

Darkly at noon. And, as the strange old man

Went his slow way, until his silver hair

Set like the white moon where the hills of vine

Slope to the Rhine, he bowed his head and said :

"My prayer is answered. God hath sent the man

Long sought, to teach me, by his simple trust,
Wisdom the weary schoolmen never knew."

So, entering with a changed and cheerful step
The city gates, he saw, far down the street,
A mighty shadow break the light of noon,
Which tracing backward till its airy lines
Hardened to stony plinths, he raised his eyes
O'er broad façade and lofty pediment,
O'er architrave and frieze and sainted niche,
Up the stone lace-work chiseled by the wise
Erwin of Steinbach, dizzily up to where
In the noon-brightness the great Minster's tower,
Jeweled with sunbeams on its mural crown,
Rose like a visible prayer. "Behold!" he said,
"The stranger's faith made plain before mine eyes.
As yonder tower outstretches to the earth
The dark triangle of its shade alone
When the clear day is shining on its top,
So, darkness in the pathway of Man's life
Is but the shadow of God's providence,
By the great Sun of Wisdom cast thereon;
And what is dark below is light in Heaven."

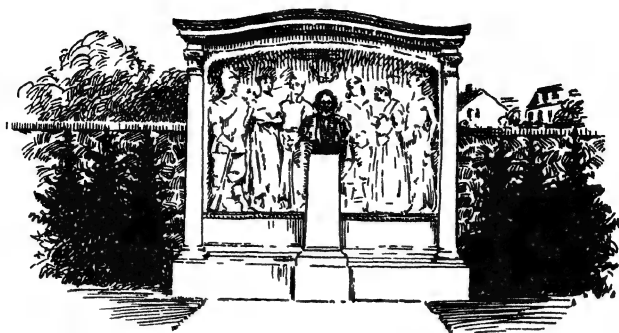
VI. CONCLUSION. Nothing better can be found with which to close this brief sketch of the anti-slavery group of American writers than the following passage, which we quote from Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America*:

Yet without a constant sense of the influences which were alive in the New England air, the literature which finally arose there can hardly be understood. It was all based on the traditions of a rigid old society, Puritan in origin and immemorially fixed in structure. To this, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, came that impulse of new life which expressed itself in such varied ways,—in the classically rounded periods of our most

finished oratory; in the scholarship which ripened into our lasting works of history; in the hopeful dreams of the Unitarians, passing insensibly into the nebulous philosophy of the Transcendentalists, and finally into first fantastic and soon militant reform. Each of these phases of our renaissance gave us names which are still worth memory: Webster, Everett and Choate; Ticknor, Prescott, Motley and Parkman; Emerson, Margaret Fuller and Thoreau; Theodore Parker, Phillips and Sumner; Mrs. Stowe and Whittier. Thus grouped together we can see these people to have been so dissimilar, and sometimes so antagonistic, that human friendship between them, or even mutual understanding, was hardly possible. At the same time as we look at them together, we must see that all possessed in common a trait which marks them as of the old New England race. Each and all were strenuously earnest; and though the earnestness of some confined itself to matters of this world,—to history, to politics, and to reform,—while that of others was centered, like that of the Puritan fathers, more on the unseen eternities, not one of them was ever free from a constant ideal of principle, of duty. Nor was the idealism of these men always confined to matters of conduct. In Emerson, more certainly than in the fathers themselves, one feels the ceaseless effort of New England to grasp, to understand, to formulate the realities which must forever lie beyond the human ken. The New Englanders of our renaissance were no longer Puritans; they had discarded the grim dogmas of Calvinism; but so far as Puritanism was a lifelong effort to recognize and to follow ideals which can never be apprehended by unaided human senses, they were still Puritan at heart.



"STERN AND ROCKBOUND COAST," MASSACHUSETTS



CHAPTER XXXIII

AMERICAN WRITERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA (CONTINUED)

NEW ENGLAND'S GREAT POETS

INTRODUCTORY. We have now reached the culmination of New England's golden age of literature, but so far have made little mention of the three great poets who rank with Hawthorne, Emerson and Whittier, namely, Holmes, Longfellow and Lowell. Longfellow is undoubtedly first in popularity, as Lowell is in scholarly excellence; Emerson may be first in profundity of thought and in power of phraseology; Longfellow's sweetness of disposition and loveliness of character are no less conspicuous in his writings than Emerson's were in his daily life. Holmes is first as a genial, altogether happy poet of occasion, whose lyrical expression is usually gay and rollicking, though oft-times serenely beautiful. Lowell is the scholar, the critic, the earnest man of affairs, but the

master of elegant phrase and vigorous expression. It is not worth our while to try to rank these men in order of greatness; let them all stand first, a sextet of excellence, Whittier, Holmes, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Lowell and Emerson. America can never cease to be proud of these her greatest literary men—great in the power of their writings, equally great in the purity and sublimity of personal character.

How intimately are they connected! All were born in the first nineteen years of the century, and for forty-five years all were living. Hawthorne was the first to go, at the comparatively youthful age of sixty; Longfellow next, at seventy-five; Emerson lived to be seventy-nine; Lowell was eighty-two; Whittier and Holmes were eighty-five. Longfellow and Whittier were born in the same year; Emerson and Longfellow died in the same year.

But the association of these men was not merely one of dates; they were acquaintances and friends, and they mention one another often in their writings; in fact, Holmes wrote a very readable biography of Emerson, and Longfellow and Lowell exchanged beautiful sympathetic poems in hours of bereavement. Holmes says Emerson was “an iconoclast who took down our idols from their pedestals so tenderly that it seemed an act of worship.” Emerson, who lived beside Hawthorne, rarely saw him; they liked each other but could not be intimate. Emerson wrote of Hawthorne:

“It was easy to talk with him; there were no barriers, only he said so little that I talked too much, and stopped only because as he gave no indications I feared to exceed. He showed no egotism, no self-assertion—I admired the man, who was simple, amiable, truth-loving and frank in conversation.”

Longfellow's estimate of Emerson was: “He is one of the finest lecturers I ever heard, with magnificent passages of true prose poetry. But it is all *dreamery* after all.” It was in a friendly letter to Lowell that Holmes wrote “I have always considered my face a convenience rather than an ornament.”

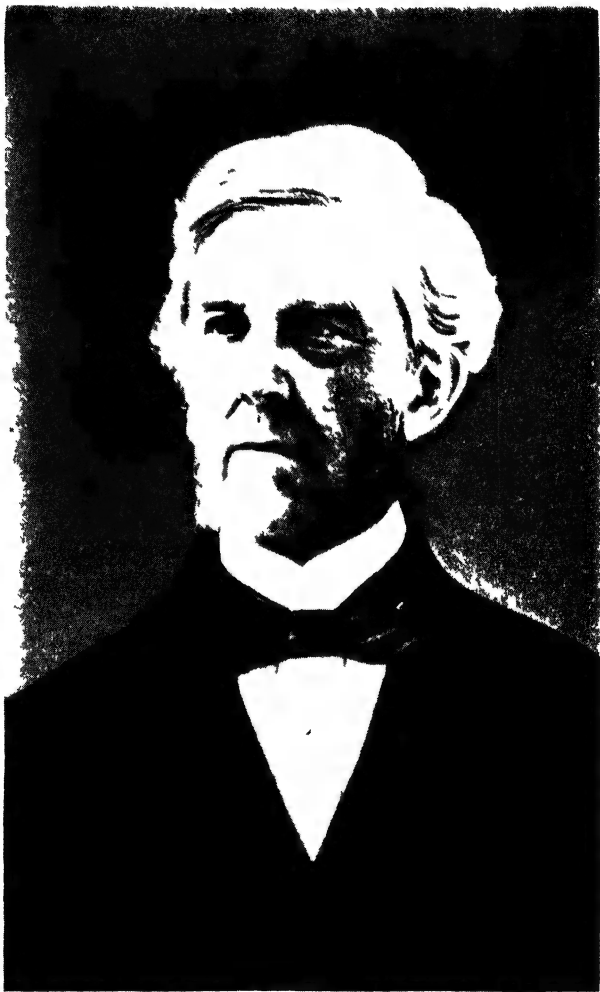
But these meager quotations give very little idea of the real relationships between them. There was the Saturday Club, of which most of them were members; but perhaps as strong a bond as any, next to their connection with Harvard, was the famous magazine, still in existence, that was founded in 1857. The function of *The Atlantic Monthly* from the first was literary, and it has held to its purpose in spite of the later decadence of literature in Boston. At the beginning, too, its contributors were largely men whose reputations were well-established; all of these six writers wrote for *The Atlantic*, and in it Holmes published his *Autocrat* series. Publisher of *The Atlantic* for many years, the lover of good literature, the publisher, critic, adviser and friend of American men of letters, was James T. Fields, whose *Yesterdays with Authors* is a book of delight-

ful reminiscences. The firm of which he was a member and which still survives under the name of Houghton, Mifflin & Company, not only published the writings of these six authors, but also of Thoreau and a host of lesser lights; so no history of American literature is complete without a mention of the old Boston house.

II. HOLMES. A distinguished professor in Harvard College, a physician whose essays on scientific subjects gave him an international reputation, the author of several delightful novels, the wittiest and one of the wisest of American essayists and a poet who has amused and inspired the people of two hemispheres—that is Dr. Holmes.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–1894) was born at Cambridge and educated at Harvard, in which institution he studied law, but finding it uncongenial, gave it up for medicine. After three years in the Harvard medical school, Holmes went abroad to study and work, principally in the hospitals of London and Paris, after which he returned to Boston and practiced medicine. In 1838 he was appointed professor of anatomy at Dartmouth College, a position which he held for two years and then abandoned to return to Boston, with which his name was thenceforward associated.

In 1857 Lowell proposed the publication of a periodical, and invited Holmes to join with him. The latter joyfully accepted, named the new publication *The Atlantic Monthly*, and at



OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
1809-1894

once began contributing to it the series of essays which immediately gave him a national reputation in place of the local one which he had previously enjoyed.

Dr. Holmes married in 1840, and his son achieved distinction in the Civil War. In *My Hunt After the Captain*, Holmes has described his interest in this young man. For many years professor of anatomy and physiology in the Harvard medical school, he is remembered rather for the brilliance and wit of his lectures than for their depth and excellence. Dr. Holmes was slight in stature, remarkably fastidious in temperament but delightful in companionship with such distinguished men as the great poets we are now considering. In his *Fable for Critics*, Lowell speaks of Holmes as follows:

There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
In long poems 'tis painful sometimes, and invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a frightening.
He has a perfect sway of what I call sham meter,
But many admire it, the English pentameter.

.

His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric,
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric
In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.

John Lothrop Motley, the historian, has written:

He is beyond question one of the most original writers in English literature, and I have no doubt his fame will go on increasing every day. I hardly know an author in any language to be paralleled with him for profound and suggestive thought, glittering wit, vivid imagination and individuality of humor.

III. THE PROSE OF DR. HOLMES. *Elsie Venner*, an interesting and powerful novel, though uneven in quality and impressive for its weirdness, is a tale of inherited tendencies which led to crime; *The Guardian Angel* contains equally interesting delineations of New England character and is more delightful as a tale. But it is not as a novelist nor even as a poet that Holmes will be best known.

The so-called *Autocrat* series consists of three books of charming essays, originally published serially in *The Atlantic Monthly*. The first of these, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, gave its name to the series, and its success was immediate and world-wide. The essays were received almost without criticism, except from orthodox Calvinists, for their beauty, wit, wisdom and sentiment appeal to everybody. They are among the most delightfully chatty writings to be found in literature, and, as their writer, Holmes has been likened to almost every famous essayist from Lamb to the present time. They treat of almost all conceivable subjects as they come up in the course of morning talks among the boarders at a

breakfast table. There is indeed a slight thread of continuity extending through each volume, and the characters, one by one, come to have a distinct personality as the reader proceeds. But the chief charm rests in the witty discussions, wise reflections and gracious sentiment of the chief person, Dr. Holmes himself, the Autocrat, the Poet, and the Professor. *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table* and *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, though in the same line as their great prototype, have never enjoyed quite the same popularity as that of the first volume. We have space for but one brief quotation, and that perhaps a hackneyed one, yet it is thoroughly characteristic of Holmes's prose. Among those who sit at the Autocrat's table is a school boy whom he calls Benjamin Franklin and to whom he tells the story of *The Cubes of Truth*. The schoolmistress mentioned is one of the most lovable of the characters introduced into the *Autocrat*. Though at first she appears and speaks only at intervals, toward the end of the book her love story and her marriage to the Autocrat afford the chief interest. *The Cubes of Truth* follows:

Listen, Benjamin Franklin! This is for you, and such others of tender age as you may tell it to.

When we are as yet small children, long before the time when those two grown ladies offer us the choice of Hercules, there comes up to us a youthful angel, holding in his right hand cubes like dice, and in his left spheres like marbles. The cubes are of stainless ivory, and on each is written in letters of Gold—TRUTH. The spheres are veined and streaked and spotted beneath, with a dark

crimson flush above where the light falls on them and in a certain aspect you can make out upon every one of them the three letters, L, I, E.

The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds that things which roll so easily are very apt to roll into the wrong corner, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others, which stay where they are left.

Thus he learns—thus we learn—to drop the streaked and speckled globes of falsehood, and to hold fast the white angular blocks of truth. But then comes Timidity, and after her Good-nature, and last of all Polite-behavior, all insisting that truth must *roll*, or nobody can do anything with it; and so the first with her coarse rasp, and the second with her broad file, and the third with her silken sleeve, do so round off and smooth and polish the snow-white cubes of truth, that, when they have got a little dingy by use, it becomes hard to tell them from the rolling spheres of falsehood.

The schoolmistress was polite enough to say that she was pleased with this, and that she would read it to her little flock the next day. But she should tell the children, she said, that there were better reasons for truth than could be found in mere experience of its convenience, and the inconvenience of lying.

Yes—I said—but education always begins through the senses, and works up to the idea of absolute right and wrong. The first thing the child has to learn about this matter is, that lying is unprofitable—afterwards, that it is against the peace and dignity of the universe.

IV. HOLMES'S POETRY. The poetry of Holmes is as varied as one might expect from

so versatile a genius. Beginning when he was but twenty-one with *Old Ironsides*, he continued at intervals to write occasional poems on all kinds of subjects and now and then to produce a vivid narrative or exquisite lyric that immediately found its place in American literature. Many of his occasional poems were written to celebrate the anniversaries of his graduation at Harvard in 1829, and it is interesting to remember that among his classmates was Samuel Francis Smith, the author of *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*.

When it was proposed to break up the frigate *Constitution* because she was too old for further use, Holmes remembered the prominent part she took in the bombardment of Tripoli and the distinction of her services in the War of 1812, and wrote the following stirring verses, which were so effective a protest that the astonished Secretary revoked his order:

OLD IRONSIDES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,

No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea.

O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale.

The finest of his lyrics, both in sentiment and execution, is *The Chambered Nautilus*:

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.
Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed.—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!
Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no
more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that
sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

As an example of his humor, one might cite *The Height of the Ridiculous* and *Contentment*, but nothing embodies it all in quite so effective a manner as *The Deacon's Masterpiece*, which bears as a subtitle, *The Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay," A Logical Story*:

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive;
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,

And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise breaks down, but doesn't wear out.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*"),
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'n' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it couldn't break daown;
"Fur," said the Deacon, "t's mighty plain
That the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jist
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;

Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then came fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundreth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art

Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt,
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
'Huddup!' said the parson.—Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

Years after the production of *The Deacon's Masterpiece*, some one remarked that Holmes was losing his power, and to demonstrate the contrary he quickly produced *How the Old Horse Won the Bet*, which, if not the equal of its predecessor, is still an exceedingly humorous and delightful narrative.

In *The Last Leaf*, an almost perfect example of society verse, there is a suggestion of pathos that is no less vivid because of the incongruity of the principal figure:

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear

Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

V. LONGFELLOW. The much-loved poet of the American home, the man who had the deepest insight into those emotions which make better fathers and mothers, children, brothers and sisters, is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who sang of the human heart in loving tenderness. His long life of spotless integrity, his strong

desire to live right, to think right and to teach right gave him the power to touch the hearts of his hearers. He wrote of children and for children with a wealth of affection and a keenness of understanding that compel the admiration and reverential love of his little readers. Other poets have appealed to the imagination and the intellect with greater force, but no one has so touched the heart.

Longfellow, though a man of general culture, does not write for the literary public. His relation is to the great body of readers, though his personal intimacies seem to have been almost exclusively with literary or academic people. Sympathy with the broadly human is one of the marks of the true poet. To put simple things into form requires genius; for thousands try to do it every day and fail for lack of the special gift. Longfellow succeeded, and those who say that his themes and method are alike commonplace forget that the touch which illuminates the commonplace is the most delicate in art.

Longfellow was born in 1807, and lived to be seventy-five years old, dying in the same quiet, peaceful way in which he had lived his long and earnest life. It was the life of a student and a poet, a man of deep feeling and steady purpose.

He was early possessed by a strong desire to be eminent in some line, and all his tastes led to literature. He wrote, and his mother's sympathetic criticism assisted him to perfect his style and encouraged him to continue his practice. When he was graduated from college he found himself driven by circumstances to

undertake the study of the law, but fortunately at this juncture came an offer of the chair of modern languages in Bowdoin College, of which he was a graduate. It can easily be imagined that he accepted the invitation with joy, particularly as it was coupled with the privilege of three years of European study before he entered upon his duties. For five and a half years he held this position, and was much beloved by the students who sat in his classes. He was witty, helpful and sympathetic, a notable teacher. Receiving an offer of a like position at Harvard, he left Bowdoin and studied abroad for eighteen months before entering upon his new duties. For eighteen years he taught in Harvard, and then resigned because he felt the burden of the daily routine and because he wished to devote himself more exclusively to his writings. He was succeeded by James Russell Lowell.

Longfellow was twice married, his first wife dying while she was abroad with him in 1835. His poem *Footsteps of Angels*, written three years after her death, is a touching tribute of his love. By his second wife he had several children whose happy faces were his greatest delight and who occupied his heart alone after the terrible calamity which deprived him of the loving companionship of their mother. She was burned to death by her clothing catching fire from a lighted match with which she had just sealed a lock of hair from one of her children. To one of Longfellow's sensitive nature



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
1807-1882

the affliction came with doubled force, and he never ceased to mourn her loss.

Much of his poetry was personal in growth and came from depths of experience. This gave to it that peculiar power by which it holds every reader. *The Psalm of Life* marks his return to poetry after the death of his first wife, and of it he says: "I kept it some time in manuscript, unwilling to show it to any one—it being a voice from my inmost heart of a time when I was rallying from depression." *The Bridge* is his own experience; the *Ode to a Child* was addressed to his own son Charles, and *Resignation* is the expression of his soul's deepest feeling when his baby Fanny died. Many of the subjects he selects are the common things near himself, and he was never averse to using whatever inspired his poetic thought, yet it was all so transmuted in the pure recesses of his mind that it has well been said of him, as of Sir Walter Scott, that he wrote no word he could wish blotted out.

The following sonnet, one of the finest ever written, seems descriptive of his end:

As a fond mother when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which though more splendid may not please him more;
So nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings, one by one, and by the hand

Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we know.

VI. LONGFELLOW'S LONGER POEMS. It seems the work of supererogation even to mention by name the leading poems by Longfellow, for in the United States there are few homes of even limited culture where his works are not familiar, and yet to pass them by unnoticed is to do a great injustice to his memory. If the judgment of time and the critics fail to place him among the immortal great, he will always be a favorite among the true and simple minded, who have in their hearts the love of family and their fellow man. Moreover, the extraordinary popularity of Longfellow and the high moral sentiment of all his writings have combined to influence for good more human lives by far than ever have been touched by the words of those who may have been much greater as literary men. Although it is through his lyrics that his greatest influence has been felt, his longer poems have contained many a message of cheer and good will to his millions of readers.

After writing *Hyperion*, an overdrawn romance in which the heroine is Miss Frances Appleton of Boston, whom he afterward married, and *The Spanish Student*, a drama which is generally and perhaps deservedly forgotten, he published in 1847 *Evangeline*, a highly popular and beautiful pastoral in hexameters.

This fixed the reputation which had been growing from his lyrics, and made him the most noted of American poets of his time. *Evangeline* has just enough of historical background to add interest to the romance, for the dispersion of the Acadians by the English has in itself a pathos to touch the heart of any reader. Then, the charming Evangeline, and Gabriel, her lover, are genuine creations with an appealing reality, even if the latter appears weak in comparison with the devoted woman. Descriptive passages of great picturesqueness are frequent and delightful—such, for instance, as that of the home of Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand Pre, and the young people on their introduction to the reader:

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin
of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-
Pre,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his
household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the
village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy
winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-
flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown
as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen sum-
mers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn
by the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown
shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the
meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noon-
tide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the
maiden!

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell
from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with
his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon
them.

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of
beads and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the
ear-rings,

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an
heirloom,

Handed down from mother to child, through long genera-
tions.

But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—

Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after
confession,

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction
upon her.

When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of ex-
quisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the
farmer

Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a
shady

Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing
around it.

Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a
footpath

Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the
 meadow.
 Under the Sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a pent-
 house,
 Such as the traveler sees in regions remote by the road-
 side,
 Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
 Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with
 its moss-grown
 Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the
 horses.
 Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the
 barns and the farmyard.
 There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique
 ploughs and the harrows;
 There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his
 feathered seraglio,
 Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the
 selfsame
 Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
 Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village.
 In each one
 Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a stair-
 case,
 Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-
 loft.
 There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent
 inmates
 Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant
 breezes
 Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mu-
 tation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of
 Grand-Pre
 Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his
 household.
 Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his
 missal,

Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of
the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering
darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every
cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bel-
lows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the
chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the
meadow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the
rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the
swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its
fledgings;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the
swallow!

Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were
children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the
morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought
into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a
woman.

"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was
the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards
with apples;

She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and
abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

After the long years of separation, the heart-breaking search, the many bitter disappointments, Evangeline finds her way to Philadelphia when the pestilence raged in the city, and as a Sister of Mercy comforts the dying, who, looking up into her face, think indeed to behold “gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor:”

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden;
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in the Church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;
Something within her said,—“At length thy trials are ended;”
And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by
the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for
her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of
a prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the con-
soler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it for-
ever.

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-
time;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of won-
der,

Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a
shudder

Ran through her frame, and forgotten, the flowerets
dropped from her fingers,

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of
the morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible
anguish,

That the dying heard it, and started up from their pil-
lows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an
old man.

Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded
his temples;

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a mo-
ment

Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier man-
hood;

So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are
dying.

Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the
fever,

As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled
its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit ex-
hausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in
the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sink-
ing.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied rever-
berations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that
succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his
childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking un-
der their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eye-
lids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his
bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents un-
uttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his
tongue would have spoken.
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside
him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank
into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a case-
ment.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the
sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
 All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
 And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her
 bosom,
 Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I
 thank thee!"

Next in importance followed *Hiawatha*, in 1855, and the thousands of copies sold testified to its immense popularity, which, however, finds its continuance now among the millions of children who read the old Indian legends with never-failing enjoyment. There has been no more successful nor poetical embodiment in literature of our predecessors, the red men. If the meter grows monotonous to the ear of adults, its simplicity and frequent repetitive lines give it the greater charm for children. Where he obtained his legends he tells us poetically in the introduction:

Should you ask me, whence these stories?
 Whence these legends and traditions,
 With the odors of the forest,
 With the dew and damp of meadows,
 With the curling smoke of wigwams,
 With the rushing of great rivers,
 With their frequent repetitions,
 And their wild reverberations,
 As of thunder in the mountains?

I should answer, I should tell you,
 "From the forests and the prairies,
 From the great lakes of the Northland,
 From the land of the Ojibways,
 From the land of the Dakotahs,
 From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands,
 Where the heron, and Shuh-shuh-gah,

Feeds among the reeds and rushes.
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawadaha,
The musician, the sweet singer."

Should you ask where Nawadaha
Found these songs, so wild and wayward,
Found these legends and traditions,
I should answer, I should tell you,
"In the birds'-nests of the forest,
In the lodges of the beaver,
In the hoof-prints of the bison,
In the eyrie of the eagle!
All the wild-fowl sang them to him,
In the moorlands and the fen-lands,
In the melancholy marshes;
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,
Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa,
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!"

If still further you should ask me
Saying, "Who was Nawadaha?
Tell us of this Nawadaha,"
I should answer your inquiries
Straightway in such words as follow:

"In the Vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley,
By the pleasant watercourses,
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.
Round about the Indian village
Spread the meadows and the cornfields,
And beyond them stood the forest,
Stood the groves of the singing pine-trees,
Green in Summer, white in Winter,
Ever sighing, ever singing.

"And the pleasant watercourses,
You could trace them through the valley,
By the rushing in the Spring-time,
By the alders in the Summer,
By the white fog in the Autumn,

By the black line in the Winter;
And beside them dwelt the singer,
In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley.

“There he sang of Hiawatha,
Sang the Song of Hiawatha,
Sang his wondrous birth and being,
How he prayed and how he fasted,
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,
That the tribes of men might prosper,
That he might advance his people!”

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,
Love the sunshine of the meadow,
Love the shadow of the forest,
Love the wind among the branches,
And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,
And the rushing of great rivers
Through their palisades of pine-trees,
And the thunder in the mountains,
Whose innumerable echoes
Flap like eagles in their eyries;—
Listen to these wild traditions,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye who love a nation's legends,
Love the ballads of a people,
That like voices from afar off
Waving like a hand that beckons,
Call to us to pause and listen,
Speak in tones so plain and childlike,
Scarcely can the ear distinguish
Whether they are sung or spoken;—
Listen to this Indian Legend,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe, that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings

For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness
And are lifted up and strengthened;—
Listen to this simple story,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye, who sometimes in your rambles
Through the green lanes of the country,
Where the tangled barberry-bushes
Hang their tufts of crimson berries
Over stone walls gray with mosses,
Pause by some neglected graveyard,
For a while to muse, and ponder
On a half-effaced inscription,
Written with little skill of song-craft,
Homely phrases, but each letter
Full of hope, and yet of heart-break,
Full of all the tender pathos
Of the Here and the Hereafter;—
Stay and read this rude inscription,
Read this Song of Hiawatha!

Three years later appeared *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, which delineates the pleasing side of the life of the Pilgrims in a lightsome and charming manner which Cotton Mather would have found it hard to justify. That Longfellow was far from being devoid of a sense of humor, let the following little scene testify. John Alden, the young clerk of Miles Standish, has been sent to convey to Priscilla the marriage proposal of his master, though he would much prefer the maiden for himself:

So, he entered the house: and the hum of the wheel
and the singing

Suddenly ceased; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on
 the threshold,
 Rose as he entered, and gave him her hand, in signal of
 welcome,
 Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in
 the passage;
 For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spin-
 ning."
 Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him
 had been mingled
 Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of
 the maiden,
 Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for
 an answer,
 Finding no words for his thought. He remembered that
 day in the winter,
 After the first great snow, when he broke a path from the
 village,
 Reeling and plunging along through the drifts that en-
 cumbered the doorway,
 Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered the house,
 and Priscilla
 Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat by the
 fireside,
 Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of her in
 the snow-storm.
 Had he but spoken then! perhaps not in vain had he
 spoken;
 Now it was all too late; the golden moment had van-
 ished!
 So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers for an
 answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the
 beautiful Spring-time,
 Talked of their friends at home, and the *Mayflower* that
 sailed on the morrow.
 "I have been thinking all day," said gently the Puritan
 maiden,

“Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedge-
rows of England,—
They are in blossom now, and the country is all like a
garden;
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the lark
and the linnet,
Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of neighbors
Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip together,
And, at the end of the street, the village church, with the
ivy
Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the
churchyard.
Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me my re-
ligion;
Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back in Old
England.
You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it: I almost
Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and
wretched.”

Thereupon answered the youth:—“Indeed I do not
condemn you;
Stouter hearts than a woman’s have quailed in this ter-
rible winter.
Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger to
lean on;
So I have come to you now, with an offer and proffer of
marriage
Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish, the Cap-
tain of Plymouth!”

Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous writer of
letters,—
Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in beautiful
phrases,
But came straight to the point, and blurted it out like a
schoolboy;
Even the Captain himself could hardly have said it more
bluntly.

Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan
maiden

Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with wonder,
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered
her speechless;

Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous
silence:

"If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to
wed me,

Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to
woo me?

If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the
winning!"

Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the
matter,

Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was
busy,—

Had no time for such things;—such things! the words
grating harshly

Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made
answer:

"Has he no time for such things, as you call it, before
he is married,

Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wed-
ding?

That is the way with you men; you don't understand us,
you cannot.

When you have made up your minds, after thinking of
this one and that one,

Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with an-
other,

Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and
sudden avowal,

And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps, that
a woman

Does not respond at once to a love that she never
suspected,

Does not attain at a bound the height to which you have
been climbing.

This is not right nor just : for surely a woman's affection
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the asking.
When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but
shows it.

Had he but waited a while, had he only showed that he
loved me,
Even this Captain of yours—who knows?—at last might
have won me,
Old and rough as he is ; but now it never can happen."

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of
Priscilla,
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading, ex-
panding ;
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles in
Flanders,
How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer af-
fliction,
How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain
of Plymouth ;
He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plain-
ly
Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire,
England,
Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurs-
ton de Standish ;
Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded.
Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock
argent
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.
He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature ;
Though he was rough, he was kindly ; she knew how dur-
ing the winter
He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as
woman's ;
Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and head-
strong,
Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable
always,

Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little
 of stature;
 For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, cou-
 rageous;
 Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,
 Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles
 Standish!

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and elo-
 quent language,
 Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,
 Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning
 with laughter,
 Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you speak for
 yourself, John?"

In the same framework that Chaucer used
 in *The Canterbury Tales*, Longfellow placed
 in his *Tales of a Wayside Inn* six charming
 narrative poems, besides the twenty-two sec-
 tions of the *Saga of King Olaf*. Such well-
 known and popular tales as *Paul Revere's
 Ride*, *The Falcon of Sir Federigo* and *The
 Birds of Killingworth* all found a place there,
 as well as the more powerful *Torquemada* and
 the beautifully impressive tale of the Spanish
 Jew, *The Legend of Rabbi Ben Levi*:

Rabbi Ben Levi, on the Sabbath, read
 A volume of the Law, in which it said,
 "No man shall look upon my face and live."
 And as he read, he prayed that God would give
 His faithful servant grace with mortal eye
 To look upon His face and yet not die.

Then fell a sudden shadow on the page
 And, lifting up his eyes, grown dim with age,
 He saw the Angel of Death before him stand,
 Holding a naked sword in his right hand.

Rabbi Ben Levi was a righteous man,
Yet through his veins a chill of terror ran.
With trembling voice he said, "What wilt thou here?"
The Angel answered, "Lo! the time draws near
When thou must die; yet first, by God's decree,
Whate'er thou askest shall be granted thee."
Replied the Rabbi, "Let these living eyes
First look upon my place in Paradise."

Then said the Angel, "Come with me and look."
Rabbi Ben Levi closed the sacred book,
And rising, and uplifting his gray head,
"Give me thy sword," he to the Angel said,
"Lest thou shouldst fall upon me by the way."
The Angel smiled and hastened to obey,
Then led him forth to the Celestial Town,
And set him on the wall, whence, gazing down,
Rabbi Ben Levi, with his living eyes,
Might look upon his place in Paradise.

Then straight into the city of the Lord
The Rabbi leaped with the Death-angel's sword,
And through the streets there swept a sudden breath
Of something there unknown, which men call death.
Meanwhile the Angel stayed without, and cried,
"Come back!" To which the Rabbi's voice replied,
"No! in the name of God, whom I adore,
I swear that hence I will depart no more!"
Then all the Angels cried, "O Holy One,
See what the son of Levi here has done!
The kingdom of Heaven he takes by violence,
And in Thy name refuses to go hence!"
The Lord replied, "My Angels, be not wroth;
Did e'er the son of Levi break his oath?
Let him remain; for he with mortal eye
Shall look upon my face and yet not die."

Beyond the outer wall the Angel of Death
Heard the great voice, and said, with panting breath,

"Give back the sword, and let me go my way."
Whereat the Rabbi paused, and answered, "Nay!
Anguish enough already has it caused
Among the sons of men." And while he paused
He heard the awful mandate of the Lord
Resounding through the air, "Give back the sword!"

The Rabbi bowed his head in silent prayer;
Then said he to the dreadful Angel, "Swear,
No human eye shall look on it again;
But when thou takest away the souls of men,
Thyself unseen, and with an unseen sword,
Thou wilt perform the bidding of the Lord."

The Angel took the sword again, and swore,
And walks on earth unseen for evermore.

With the exception of *The Golden Legend*, Longfellow's other dramatic poems and his minor epics may be dismissed without mention, but one cannot omit a word concerning his numerous translations, which, while written in perfect English, convey the meaning and force of the original in a peculiarly natural manner. Of such, nothing is finer than *The Children of the Lord's Supper*, from the Swedish of Bishop Tegner.

VII. LONGFELLOW'S LYRICS. What shall be said, to those who already know and love them, of the fine lyrics, and what can be done for the reader who knows nothing of them! After all is said, selections are nothing but an expression of personal opinion, and ranking them in order of merit for another to read is an impossibility; for the appeal is always personal, and experience speaks only to experience. There

are people who, like the author, will find his greatest appeal in such lines as those in the matchless *Hymn to the Night*:

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed-for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

Again, what is more provocative of sentiment in recollection than those other verses of *My Lost Youth*, even though it is intensely personal and local to Portland?

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me,
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song,
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

The Footsteps of Angels, The Reaper and the Flowers, The Psalm of Life, The Rainy Day, The Day is Done, The Arrow and the Song, The Builders, Excelsior, The Children's Hour and many another we might mention have each a forcible appeal to every one, at least at some period of life or under some particular mood, and fortunate is he who has them all so well in mind that they can be recalled at need.

In closing this sketch we quote a sonnet, *Victor and Vanquished*, which is faultless in construction, elegant in phraseology, and powerful in its appeal, at least to those who have passed middle life:

As one who long hath fled with panting breath
Before his foe, bleeding and near to fall,
I turn and set my back against the wall,
And look thee in the face, triumphant Death.
I call for aid, and no one answereth;
I am alone with thee, who conquerest all;
Yet me thy threatening form doth not appall,
For thou art but a phantom and a wraith;
Wounded and weak, sword broken at the hilt,
With armor shattered, and without a shield,
I stand unmoved; do with me what thou wilt;

I can resist no more, but will not yield.

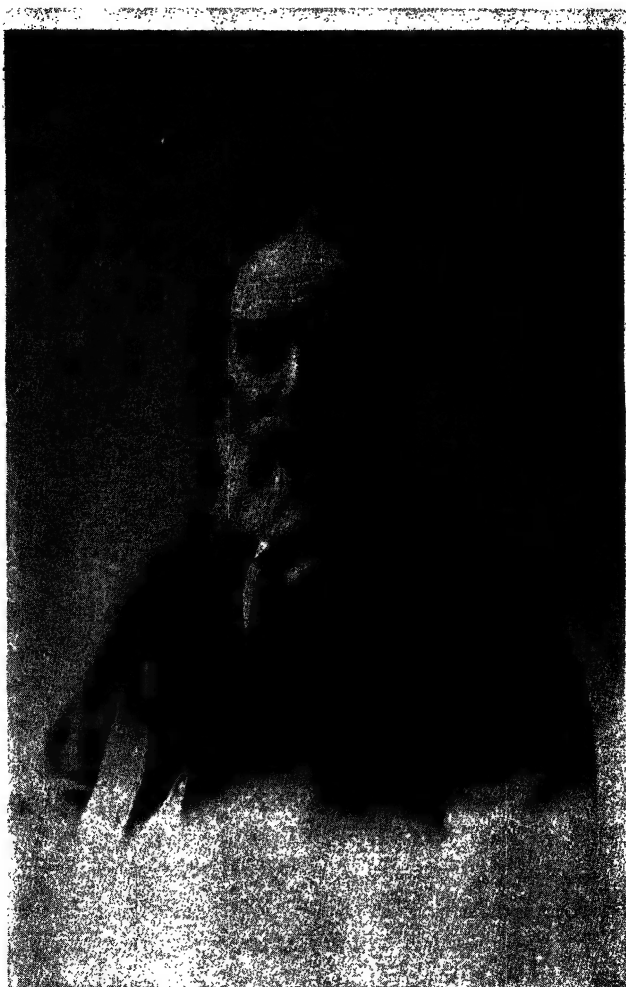
This is no tournament where cowards tilt;
The vanquished here is victor of the field.

VIII. LOWELL. Lowell was one of the few American writers to achieve first rank in several lines of activity. His poetry is exquisite in sentiment, abounds in beautiful expressions, is full of thought, and often extremely witty. His criticisms, though at times caustic and severe, show so clear a grasp of his subject, such profound scholarship, and are delivered in so fearless a way that the great influence they exerted at first may be felt even now. Moreover, he was a diplomat who could win such credit in the court of Spain that he was transferred to England, where, as minister at the court of St. James, he handled our foreign relations so skillfully and was so popular with the British in a social way and so highly honored for his scholarship that his departure for America caused universal regret.

James Russell Lowell (1819–1891) was born at Elmwood, the home of his father, a Unitarian clergyman at Cambridge. At sixteen Lowell entered Harvard College, where his father and grandfather had preceded him, and became the poet of his class on its graduation. He studied law, but never seriously practiced it, for his leaning was all toward literature, which, however, for a long time proved rather unremunerative. In 1844 he married Maria White, who herself wrote poetry and whose high character and earnestness were strong

and encouraging influences over the young poet. Keenly intellectual by nature, he drew his associates from the most cultivated people, and was generally admired for his scholarly tastes and refined manners. Elmwood, where he lived, was situated in the midst of groves several acres in extent, and the great variety of trees, the luxuriant shrubbery and flowering plants attracted many varieties of birds and other forms of animal life. For all of these he had the warmest love, and no American poet, with the single exception of Bryant, has seemed to have a keener insight into nature or more skill in putting into attractive form the results of his observations.

His baby daughter died, and his intimate personal feelings were enshrined in those beautiful lyrics, *She Came and Went*, *The First Snowfall* and *The Changeling*. Then his wife, too, passed away, and again his grief resulted in the production of two poems of matchless beauty, *After the Burial* and *The Dead House*. It is interesting in this connection to note that on the same night that Lowell's wife died a child was born to Longfellow, who touchingly alluded to the coincidence in *The Two Angels*. By 1855 his fame as a poet was well established, and in that year he was appointed to succeed Longfellow as Smith professor of modern languages at Harvard College, a position which he held for twenty-two years. As little teaching was required of him, he was enabled to give his attention almost entirely to his



JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL
1819-1891

studies and writings, and as a result he began to produce his best critical prose work. In 1857 he married Miss Frances Dunlop of Portland, and the same year became editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, in which position he remained five years, and from 1864 to 1872 he was joint editor of the *North American Review*. In these two magazines most of his best literary and critical essays were first printed.

Like all the great poets of this epoch, Lowell was keenly interested in the anti-slavery movement, and one, at least, of his most masterly productions, *The Biglow Papers*, is on that subject in the two wars that our country had suffered. Other poems, together with his famous tributes to Washington, Lincoln and to America, made him recognized as the greatest American patriotic poet.

Lowell took an ardent interest in politics after the Civil War and served on the famous Electoral Commission, voting with the majority that seated Hayes in preference to Tilden. In 1877 he was offered the Austrian mission, but declined it, admitting in a half-humorous way, however, that he had always wanted to see one of Calderon's plays produced. Promptly then came the appointment as minister to Spain, which was accepted. Three years later he was transferred to London, where he remained until 1885.

Not long before the close of Lowell's mission to England, his wife, who had been in poor health for a long time, died after a brief ill-

ness, and he returned to America, abandoned Elmwood, and thereafter lived contentedly with his married daughter not far from Boston. He died in 1891, and was buried with his family in the beautiful Mount Auburn cemetery, not far from the grave of Longfellow.

He was essentially a fighter; he could always begin the attack, and always in criticism as in talk, sound the charge and open the fire. The old Puritan conscience was deep in him, with its strong simple vision, even in aesthetic things, of evil and of good, of wrong and of right, and his magnificent wit was all at its special service. He armed it, for vindication and persuasion, with all the amenities, the "humanities"—with weapons as sharp as it has ever carried.

Before leaving this last of our great American poets of the Victorian Era, let us turn our attention to the impressive fact that Lowell and Longfellow, Emerson and Holmes, all sons of clergymen, with Whittier, Bryant and others, have by their spotless characters, high motives and the purity of their writings given a tone to American literature that has never been surpassed here or abroad. Home and country, the ties of kindred and of friends, nature and her inspiration, God and His love have been their themes. The brilliancy of their work has in no way suffered for their adherence to righteousness, and they have demonstrated that the wretched character of many another man of genius has been a blemish to literary history and that his success has been in spite of his errors and not because of them.

IX. LOWELL'S LONGER POEMS. The Yankee dialect of *The Biglow Papers* and the scholarly English of the *Commemoration Ode* may be said to mark the two extremes of Lowell's range in poetry, and though the immense popularity of the former has faded, largely because of its localisms, and the depth and formality of the *Commemoration Ode* have placed it rather beyond the majority of readers, there lie between the two a great number of poems that still touch the popular heart, appeal to its imagination and awaken its powers for good. The caustic wit and humorous satire of the *Fable for Critics* served to settle the position in literature of the minor American writers and critics who had preceded Lowell, but it lacked something possessed by the European writers, who had tried the same methods, to give it a continuous favor in public estimation.

When, in 1846, Lowell published the first series of *Biglow Papers*, he struck a popular chord that continued to ring for many years. The first series was called out by the Mexican War, the second by the Civil War, and though the second contains some passages of great excellence, most of the things which have kept the second *Papers* alive, like *The Courtin'*, have nothing to do with the political intention of the series. In comparison with the Mexican War *Papers*, then, the second series is decidedly inferior, both in interest and in popularity. What the efforts accomplished was to fix in a literary form what Lowell himself calls the

“Yankee dialect” and to create a number of characters whose names are familiar to us all and whose opinions were given from time to time through the medium of verse—the Reverend Homer Wilbur; his interesting friends, Hosea Biglow and Birdofreedom Sawin, Esq., and others. In both poetry and prose Lowell speaks his opinion on the slavery question, and while sarcasm and ridicule predominate, there are touches of pathos as impressive as they are unexpected. During the Civil War Lowell lost two nephews, whose death he laments as follows:

Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street
I hear the drummers makin' riot,
An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
That follored once an' now are quiet,—
White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
That never knowed the paths o' Satan,
Whose comin' step ther' 's ears thet won't,
No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.

Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee?
Didn't I love to see 'em growin',
Three likely lads ez wal could be,
Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu knowin'?
I set an' look into the blaze
Whose natur', jes' like theirn, keeps climbin',
Ez long, 'z it lives, in shinin' ways,
An' half despise myself for rhymin'.

Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth
On War's red techstone rang true metal,
Who ventured life an' love an' youth
For that gret prize o' death in battle?

To him who, deadly hurt, agen
 Flashed on afore the charge's thunder,
Tippin' with fire the bolt of men
 Thet rived the Rebel line asunder?

'Tain't right to hev the young go fust,
 All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces,
Leavin' life's paupers dry ez dust
 To try an' mak b'lieve fill their places:
Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,
 Ther' 's gaps our lives can't never fay in,
An' *thet* world seems so fur from this
 Lef' for us loafers to grow gray in!

Most popular of Lowell's longer poems is undoubtedly *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, a return like that of Tennyson to the Arthurian legend for subject matter, but the American poet has not only added to the characters which the old legends give us, but has brought down the search for the Holy Grail to a much later time. The explanation of the Grail and of the Arthurian legends will be found elsewhere in this work. In Lowell's poem there is no very complicated plot: the youthful knight, Sir Launfal, who has decided to start on the quest of the Holy Grail, falls asleep and dreams that as he leaves his castle he sees on his doorstep a filthy leper begging alms. The knight scornfully throws him a coin, and is reproved for the spirit in which he gives. Later in his vision the knight sees himself return an aged beggar from his fruitless quest. Again he sees the leper, with whom this time he shares his last crust, and then beholds the latter trans-

formed into the Christ, who blesses him as the knight awakens to rule his domain in righteousness thereafter. The lesson of the poem is carried irresistibly to us, not by convincing argument but by the emotional power of the poem, which teaches us that

The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need.

The poem is divided into two parts, and each is introduced by a prelude of remarkable beauty. In fact, much of the popularity of the poem is owing to these two preludes, the first of which pictures a summer scene in harmony with the youthfulness, pride and beauty of the young knight setting forth on his quest, while the second gives a winter scene no less in harmony with the return of the aged and disappointed Sir Launfal. Choice phrases abound, not only in the introduction but throughout the poem, such, for instance, as in that stanza so often quoted from the first interlude:

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

No better idea of Lowell's phrasal skill, poetic instinct and vivid descriptive power can be given than by placing, juxtaposition, the two pictures we have just mentioned. Here is *Summer*:

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;

Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays:

Whether we look, or whether we listen,

We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;

Every clod feels a stir of might,

An instinct within it that reaches and towers,

And, groping blindly above it for light,

Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;

The flush of life may well be seen

Thrilling back over hills and valleys;

The cowslip startles in meadows green,

The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,

And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean

To be some happy creature's palace;

The little bird sits at his door in the sun,

Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,

And lets his illumined being o'errun

With the deluge of summer it receives;

His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,

And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;

He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—

In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,

And whatever of life hath ebbed away

Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,

Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;

Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,

We are happy now because God wills it;

No matter how barren the past may have been,

'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;

We sit in the warm shade and feel right well

How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;

We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing

That skies are clear and grass is growing;

The breeze comes whispering in our ear,

That dandelions are blossoming near,

That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,

That the river is bluer than the sky,

That the robin is plastering his house hard by ;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack ;
 We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark ! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
 Tells all in his lusty crowing !

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how ;
Everything is happy now,
 Everything is upward striving ;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,
 'Tis the natural way of living :
Who knows whither the clouds have fled ?
 In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake ;
And the eyes forget the tears they shed,
 The heart forgets its sorrow and ache ;
The soul partakes of the season's youth,
 And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
 Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.

Compare the preceding description of summer with this, of winter :

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
 From the snow five thousand summers old ;
On open wold and hill-top bleak
 It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek ;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleaved boughs and pastures bare ;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
 'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof ;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams ;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars

As the lashes of light that trim the stars;
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,
Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond-drops,
That crystallised the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:
No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.
Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas grow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yulelog's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
Like herds of startled deer.

X. LOWELL'S LYRICS. In the preceding section we have made mention and have given some account of the great importance of Lowell's longer poems. Besides those, he wrote a number of other narrative and occasional poems that are difficult to classify and some political odes, besides the famous *Memorial Odes*, which are considered among the finest patriotic pieces in existence. In addition to those, Lowell wrote a number of lyrics that will challenge comparison with those of any other American writer and rank with the first of those composed across the water. Our first selection is made with a view of showing Lowell's appreciation of all natural objects and phenomena and of indicating the great difference in his style of treatment from that of Bryant and Longfellow. The following elaborate ode, *To the Dandelion*, is thoroughly characteristic:

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder Summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;
'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now

To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed bee
Feels a more Summer-like, warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows in the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from Heaven, which he did bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

Thou art the type of those meek charities
Which make up half the nobleness of life,
Those cheap delights the wise
Pluck from the dusty wayside of earth's strife;

Words of frank cheer, glances of friendly eyes,
Love's smallest coin, which yet to some may give
The morsel that may keep alive
A starving heart, and teach it to behold
Some glimpse of God where all before was cold.

Thy winged seeds, whereof the winds take care,
Are like the words of poet and of sage
Which through the free heaven fare,
And, now unheeded, in another age
Take root, and to the gladdened future bear
That witness which the present would not heed,
Bringing forth many a thought and deed,
And, planted safely in the eternal sky,
Bloom into stars which earth is guided by.

Full of deep love thou art, yet not more full
Than all thy common brethren of the ground,
Wherein, were we not dull,
Some words of highest wisdom might be found;
Yet earnest faith from day to day may cull
Some syllables, which, rightly joined, can make
A spell to soothe life's bitterest ache,
And ope Heaven's portals, which are near us still,
Yea, nearer even than the gates of Ill.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of Heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

But let me read thy lesson right or no,
Of one good gift from thee my heart is sure;

Old I shall never grow
While thou each year dost come to keep me pure
With legends of my childhood; ah, we owe
Well more than half life's holiness to these
Nature's first lowly influences,
At thought of which the heart's glad doors burst ope,
In dreariest days, to welcome peace and hope.

In an entirely different vein is Lowell's elegy, *Threnodia*, which should be compared with Longfellow's *Threnody*:

Gone, gone from us! and shall we see
Those sibyl-leaves of destiny,
Those calm eyes, nevermore?
Those deep, dark eyes so warm and bright,
Wherein the fortunes of the man
Lay slumbering in prophetic light,
In characters a child might scan?
So bright, and gone forth utterly!
O stern word—Nevermore!

The stars of those two gentle eyes
Will shine no more on earth;
Quenched are the hopes that had their birth,
As we watched them slowly rise,
Stars of a mother's fate;
And she would read them o'er and o'er,
Pondering, as she sate,
Over their dear astrology,
Which she had conned and conned before,
Deeming she needs must read aright
What was writ so passing bright.
And yet, alas! she knew not why,
Her voice would falter in its song,
And tears would slide from out her eye,
Silent, as they were doing wrong.
Her heart was like a wind-flower, bent
Even to breaking with the balmy dew,

Turning its heavenly nourishment
(That filled with tears its eyes of blue,
Like a sweet suppliant that weeps in prayer,
Making her innocence show more fair,
Albeit unwitting of the ornament),
Into a load too great for it to bear:
O stern word—Nevermore!

The tongue, that scarce had learned to claim
An entrance to a mother's heart
By that dear talisman, a mother's name,
Sleeps all forgetful of its art!
I loved to see the infant soul
(How mighty in the weakness
Of its untutored meekness!)
Peep timidly from out its nest,
His lips, the while,
Fluttering with half-fledged words,
Or hushing to a smile
That more than words expressed,
When his glad mother on him stole
And snatched him to her breast!
O, thoughts were brooding in those eyes,
That would have soared like strong-winged birds
Far, far into the skies,
Gladding the earth with song
And gushing harmonies,
Had he but tarried with us long!
O stern word—Nevermore!

How peacefully they rest,
Crossfolded there
Upon his little breast,
Those small, white hands that ne'er were still before,
But ever sported with his mother's hair,
Or the plain cross that on her breast she wore!
Her heart no more will beat
To feel the touch of that soft palm,
That ever seemed a new surprise

Sending glad thoughts up to her eyes
To bless him with their holy calm,—
Sweet thoughts! they made her eyes as sweet.
How quiet are the hands
That wove those pleasant bands!
But that they do not rise and sink
With his calm breathing, I should think
That he were dropped asleep.
Alas! too deep, too deep
Is this his slumber!
Time scarce can number
The years ere he shall wake again—
O, may we see his eyelids open then!
O stern word—Nevermore!

As the airy gossamere,
Floating in the sunlight clear,
Where'er it toucheth clingeth tightly
Round glossy leaf or stump unsightly,
So from his spirit wandered out
Tendrils spreading all about,
Knitting all things to its thrall
With a perfect love of all:
O stern word—Nevermore!

He did but float a little way
Adown the stream of time,
With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,
Or hearkening to their fairy chime;
His slender sail
Ne'er felt the gale;
He did but float a little way,
And, putting to the shore
While yet 'twas early day,
Went calmly on his way,
To dwell with us no more!
No jarring did he feel,
No grating on his shallop's keel;
A strip of silver sand

Mingled the waters with the land
Where he was seen no more :
O stern word—Nevermore !

Full short his journey was ; no dust
Of earth unto his sandals clave ;
The weary weight that old men must,
He bore not to the grave.
He seemed a cherub who had lost his way
And wandered hither, so his stay
With us was short, and 'twas most meet
That he should be no delver in Earth's clod,
Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
To stand before his God ;
O blest word—Evermore !

One of the greatest scholars the country has known, it is not surprising that Lowell should have written much upon reading, poetry and literary subjects in general. Besides his extensive prose criticisms, however, he has written a number of sonnets and other minor poems which reflect this phase of his character. We quote one of the former, *Reading*:

As one who on some well-known landscape looks,
Be it alone, or with some dear friend nigh,
Each day beholdeth fresh variety,
New harmonies of hills, and trees, and brooks—
So is it with the worthiest choice of books,
And oftenest read : if thou no meaning spy,
Deem there is meaning wanting in thine eyes ;
We are so lured from judgment by the crooks
And winding ways of covert fantasy,
Or turned unwittingly down beaten tracks
Of our foregone conclusions, that we see,
In our own want, the writer's misdeemed lacks :
It is with true books as with Nature, each
New day of living doth new insight teach.

XI. LOWELL'S PROSE. Lowell has contributed to English literature a body of scholarly prose that ranks higher than that of any other American and is quite on a par with the productions of the best English writers of his age. While the bulk of it is in the domain of criticism, his political and social papers are not the less valuable. As a young man, in his *Biglow Papers*, Lowell displayed a political insight highly remarkable in one of his age, and this trait of character continued to grow with his years and manifest itself at frequent intervals, resulting in such books as his *Democracy and Other Addresses*, *Political Essays*, etc. His *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*, his *Latest Literary Essays and Addresses* and his *Old English Dramatists* have each their value, but some of his best literary and critical essays and descriptive and reminiscent sketches are to be found in *Fireside Travels*, *Among My Books* and *My Study Windows*. Lowell's *Letters*, which appeared in 1883, is perhaps the finest collection of that sort that has ever appeared in America.

At its best, Lowell's style is full of vigor; it flows clearly and easily, and shows the cultured mind, the generous nature and the poetic temperament of the author. He has all the resources of a writer at his command, and uses them with the skill of a master, so that it is safe to say that when Lowell's literary work is considered in all its phases he must be ranked as the greatest American writer of his time.

Though in certain respects he may have been excelled by Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes or Bryant, no one of these men ever approached him in comprehensiveness of genius, perfection of scholarship or power of expression. The following extract from *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*, in *Fireside Travels*, shows him in the lighter vein of personal reminiscence:

The seat of the oldest college in America, it had, of course, some of that cloistered quiet which characterizes all university towns. But, underlying this, it had an idiosyncrasy of its own. Boston was not yet a city, and Cambridge was still a country village, with its own habits and traditions, not yet feeling too strongly the force of suburban gravitation. Approaching it from the west by what was then called the New Road (it is so called no longer, for we change our names whenever we can, to the great detriment of all historical association) you would pause on the brow of Symond's Hill to enjoy a view singularly soothing and placid. In front of you lay the town, tufted with elms, lindens, and horse-chestnuts, which had seen Massachusetts a colony, and were fortunately unable to emigrate with the tories by whom, or by whose fathers, they were planted. Over it rose the noisy belfry of the college, the square, brown tower of the church, and the slim, yellow spire of the parish meeting-house, by no means ungraceful, and then an invariable characteristic of New England religious architecture. On your right, the Charles slipped smoothly through green and purple salt-meadows, darkened, here and there, with the blossoming black-grass as with a stranded cloud-shadow. Over these marshes, level as water, but without its glare, and with softer and more soothing gradations of perspective, the eye was carried to a horizon of softly-rounded hills. To your left hand, upon the Old Road, you saw some half-dozen dignified old houses of the colonial time, all comfortably fronting southward. If it were

spring-time, the rows of horse-chestnuts along the fronts of these houses showed, through every crevice of their dark heap of foliage, and on the end of every drooping limb, a cone of pearly flowers, while the hill behind was white or rosy with the crowding blooms of various fruit-trees. There is no sound, unless a horseman clatters over the loose planks of the bridge, while his antipodal shadow glides silently over the mirrored bridge below, or unless—

“O winged rapture, feathered soul of spring,
Blithe voice of woods, fields, waters, all in one,
Pipe blown through by the warm, mild breath of June,
Shepherding her white flocks of woolly clouds,
The Bobolink has come, and climbs the wind
With rippling wings, that quaver, not for flight,
But only joy, or, yielding to its will,
Runs down, a brook of laughter, through the air.”

Thirty years ago, the Town had indeed a character. Railways and omnibuses had not rolled flat all little social prominences and peculiarities, making every man as much a citizen every where as at home. No Charlestown boy could come to our annual festival, without fighting to avenge a certain traditional porcine imputation against the inhabitants of that historic locality, to which our youth gave vent, in fanciful imitations of the dialect of the sty, or derisive shouts of “Charlestown hogs!” The penny newspaper had not yet silenced the tripod of the barber, oracle of news. Every body knew every body, and all about every body, and village wit, whose high ‘change was around the little market-house in the town-square, had labeled every more marked individuality with nick-names that clung like burs. Things were established then, and men did not run through all the figures on the dial of society so swiftly as now, when hurry and competition seem to have quite unhung the modulating pendulum of steady thrift, and competent training. Some slow-minded persons even followed their father’s trade, an humiliating spectacle, rarer every day. We

had our established loafers, toppers, proverb-mongers, barber, parson, nay, postmaster, whose tenure was for life. The great political engine did not then come down at regular quadrennial intervals, like a nail-cutting machine, to make all official lives of standard length, and to generate lazy and intriguing expectancy. Life flowed in recognized channels, narrower, perhaps, but with all the more individuality and force.

Then, there was S., whose resounding "haw! haw! haw! by George!" positively enlarged the income of every dweller in Cambridge. In downright, honest good cheer and good neighborhood it was worth five hundred a year to every one of us. Its jovial thunders cleared the mental air of every sulky cloud. Perpetual childhood dwelt in him, the childhood of his native Southern France, and its fixed air was all the time bubbling up and sparkling and winking in his eyes. It seemed as if his placid old face were only a mask behind which a merry Cupid had ambushed himself, peeping out all the while, and ready to drop it when the play grew tiresome. Every word he uttered seemed to be hilarious, no matter what the occasion. If he were sick and you visited him, if he had met with a misfortune (and there are few men so wise that they can look even at the back of a retiring sorrow with composure), it was all one; his great laugh went off as if it were set like an alarum-clock, to run down, whether he would or no, at a certain nick. Even after an ordinary *good morning!* (especially if to an old pupil, and in French,) the wonderful *haw! haw! haw! by George!* would burst upon you unexpectedly like a salute of artillery on some holiday which you had forgotten. Every thing was a joke to him—that the oath of allegiance had been administered to him by your grandfather,—that he had taught Prescott his first Spanish (of which he was proud)—no matter what. Every thing came to him marked by nature—*right side up, with care*, and he kept it so. The world to him, as to all of us, was like a medal, on the obverse of which is stamped the image of

Joy, and on the reverse that of Care. S. never took the foolish pains to look at that other side, even if he knew its existence; much less would it have occurred to him to turn it into view and insist that his friends should look at it with him. Nor was this a mere outside good-humor; its source was deeper in a true Christian kindness and amenity. Once when he had been knocked down by a tipsily-driven sleigh, and was urged to prosecute the offenders—"No, no," he said, his wounds still fresh, "young blood! young blood! it must have its way; I was young myself." Was! few men come into life so young as S. went out. He landed in Boston (then the front door of America in '93, and, in honor of the ceremony, had his head powdered afresh, and put on a suit of court-mourning before he set foot on the wharf. My fancy always dressed him in that violet silk, and his soul certainly wore a full court-suit. What was there ever like his bow? It was as if you had received a decoration, and could write yourself gentleman from that day forth. His hat rose, regreeting your own, and, having sailed through the stately curve of the old *régime*, sank gently back over that placid brain which harbored no thought less white than the powder which covered it. I have sometimes imagined that there was a graduated arc over his head, invisible to other eyes than his, by which he meted out to each his rightful share of castorial consideration. I carry in my memory three exemplary bows. The first is that of an old beggar, who already carrying in his hand a white hat, the gift of benevolence, took off the black one from his head also, and profoundly saluted me with both at once, giving me, in return for my alms, a dual benediction, puzzling as a nod from Janus Bifrons. The second I received from an old Cardinal who was taking his walk just outside the Porta San Giovanni at Rome. I paid him the courtesy due to his age and rank. Forthwith rose—first, *the* Hat; second, the hat of his confessor; third, that of another priest who attended him; fourth, the fringed cocked-hat of his coachman; fifth and sixth, the ditto, ditto, of his two footmen. Here was an invest-

ment, indeed; six hundred per cent interest on a single bow! The third bow, worthy to be noted in one's almanac among the other *mirabilia*, was that of S., in which courtesy had mounted to the last round of her ladder,—and tried to draw it up after her.

But the genial veteran is gone even while I am writing this, and I will play Old Mortality no longer. Wandering among these recent graves, my dear friend, we may chance to——, but no, I will not end my sentence. I bid you heartily farewell!



LOWELL'S HOME, CAMBRIDGE



CHAPTER XXXIV

AMERICAN WRITERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA (CONCLUDED)

THE HISTORIANS AND WALT WHITMAN

BANCROFT. America had during the period under consideration a group of eminent historians distinguished as much by the literary style of their writings as by the breadth and minuteness of their investigations. They are rather of the narrative than of the philosophical type, and, choosing epochs of great natural interest, they succeeding in producing absorbing books. These men are George Bancroft, who selected the history of the United States for his topic; Francis Parkman, whose subject is the French and English struggle in America; William Hickling Prescott, the chronicler of Spanish conquest in America and of the same period in Spain; and Joseph Motley, the great

historian of the Netherlands. Contemporaneous with these were several others who wrote well, enjoyed their share of popularity and doubtless assisted in making possible the work of the greater men. Among these lesser historians are Jared Sparks, Richard Hildreth, T. W. Higginson, Benjamin J. Lossing and John G. Palfrey, but none of these approaches in rank the four first mentioned, who stand unrivaled in their department.

George Bancroft was born in 1800 in Massachusetts, and was a graduate of Harvard at sixteen. He studied in the universities of Germany and traveled extensively in Europe. He was always active in public affairs, and occupied important positions under the government, both at home and abroad. His first volume of the *History of the United States* was published in 1834, and the sixth and last not until fifty years later. The periods he chose were the colonial and the revolutionary, and his history terminates at the constitutional period which began in 1789. The style of his writing is clear, direct and precise. His aim is to present facts, and this he does without deliberate intention to entertain. His is philosophical work, but not so severe and exacting as is that of the more recent school. While his books are interesting, they do not absorb the attention as do those of Parkman and Motley.

II. PARKMAN. Francis Parkman, like Emerson, Lowell and Holmes, was the son of a Massachusetts clergyman and was graduated



Photo: Ewing Galloway

GEORGE BANCROFT
1800-1891

from Harvard. He attempted fiction, but his novel was a failure, while his *Oregon Trail*, which details his experiences among the Indians, has been very successful, and it is always interesting to the class of readers who find Cooper fascinating. The great work of his life, however, was to tell the story of those bloody struggles which terminated in the overthrow of French authority in America. The books did not appear in the order of the events they describe, but when collected make what the author calls a "series of historical narratives." Of these, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* is perhaps the most thrilling, the most suggestive of Cooper. *La Salle and the Discovery of the Northwest* reads like fiction and abounds in the vivid descriptions which are the most characteristic features of his work; and the two volumes *Montcalm* and *Wolfe* are typical both in style and matter of Parkman's best work.

The story of his life is one of surprising determination and unremitting labor, under conditions most unfavorable to intellectual effort. He was always of delicate constitution, and the privations incident to the trip he describes in *California and the Oregon Trail* left him a life-long invalid. Often he was unable to work for more than a few hours at a time, and was compelled to have some one read to him, and to do his writing by dictation. In spite of these obstacles, however, he made exhaustive studies, consulting and translating masses of manu-

scripts, visiting the places he described and going many times to Europe to collect the material he needed. His was a wonderful life of laborious consecration to a purpose he had conceived almost in boyhood and which he lived to see realized in the completion of his histories.

It would be easy to grow enthusiastic over his life and writings, for the spirit and dash of his words are infectious. He sought eagerly for every point that would make a picturesque narrative, and rejected nothing that would add to the reality of the characters he described. Under his pen individuals are truly alive; La Salle, Montcalm and Wolfe have personalities as vivid as those of the Indians he loves most to describe. He shows a faculty for minute observation and picturesque description of nature that almost rivals Thoreau, as may be seen by this description of Champlain in a Canadian winter:

This wintry purgatory wore away; the icy stalactites that hung from the cliffs fell crashing to the earth; the clamor of wild geese was heard; the bluebird appeared in the naked woods; the water-willows were covered with their soft caterpillar-like blossoms; the twigs of the swamp maple were flushed with ruddy bloom; the ash hung out its black tufts; the shadbush seemed a wreath of snow; the white stars of the bloodroot gleamed among dank, fallen leaves, and in the young grass of the wet meadows the marsh marigolds shone like spots of gold.

One of Parkman's most spirited descriptions is that of *The Capture of Quebec*, from *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*:

The eventful night of the twelfth was clear and calm, with no light but that of the stars. Within two hours before daybreak, thirty boats, crowded with sixteen hundred soldiers, cast off from the vessels, and floated downward, in perfect order, with the current of the ebb tide. To the boundless joy of the army, Wolfe's malady had abated, and he was able to command in person. His ruined health, the gloomy prospects of the siege, and the disaster at Montmorenci, had oppressed him with the deepest melancholy, but never impaired for a moment the promptness of his decisions, or the impetuous energy of his action. He sat in the stern of one of the boats, pale and weak, but borne up to a calm height of resolution. Every order had been given, every arrangement made, and it only remained to face the issue. The ebbing tide sufficed to bear the boats along, and nothing broke the silence of the night but the gurgling of the river, and the low voice of Wolfe, as he repeated to the officers about him the stanzas of Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, which had recently appeared and which he had just received from England. Perhaps, as he uttered those strangely appropriate words,—

“The paths of glory lead but to the grave,”

the shadows of his own approaching fate stole with mournful prophecy across his mind. “Gentlemen,” he said, as he closed his recital, “I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec to-morrow.”

As they approached the landing-place the boats edged closer in towards the northern shore, and the woody precipices rose high on their left, like a wall of undistinguished blackness.

“*Qui vive?*” shouted a French sentinel, from out the impervious gloom.

“*La France!*” answered a captain of Fraser's Highlanders, from the foremost boat.

“*A quel régiment?*” demanded the soldier.

“*De la Reine!*” promptly replied the Highland captain, who chanced to know that the regiment so desig-

nated formed part of Bougainville's command. As boats were frequently passing down the river with supplies for the garrison, and as a convoy from Bougainville was expected that very night, the sentinel was deceived, and allowed the English to proceed.

A few moments after, they were challenged again, and this time they could discern the soldier running close down to the water's edge, as if all his suspicions were aroused; but the skillful replies of the Highlander once more saved the party from discovery.

They reached the landing-place in safety,—an indentation in the shore, about a league above the city, and now bearing the name of Wolfe's Cove. Here a narrow path led up the face of the heights, and a French guard was posted at the top to defend the pass. By the force of the current, the foremost boats, including that which carried Wolfe himself, were borne a little below the spot. The general was one of the first on shore. He looked upward at the rugged heights which towered above him in the gloom. "You can try it," he coolly observed to an officer near him; "but I don't think you'll get up."

At the point where the Highlanders landed, one of their captains, Donald Macdonald, apparently the same whose presence of mind had just saved the enterprise from ruin, was climbing in advance of his men, when he was challenged by a sentinel. He replied in French, by declaring that he had been sent to relieve the guard, and ordering the soldier to withdraw. Before the latter was undeceived, a crowd of Highlanders were close at hand, while the steeps below were thronged with eager climbers, dragging themselves up by trees, roots, and bushes. The guard turned out, and made a brief though brave resistance. In a moment, they were cut to pieces, dispersed, or made prisoners; while men after men came swarming up the height, and quickly formed upon the plains above. Meanwhile, the vessels had dropped downward with the current, and anchored opposite the landing-place. The remaining troops were disembarked, and, with the dawn of day, the whole were brought in safety to the shore.

The sun rose, and, from the ramparts of Quebec, the astonished people saw the Plains of Abraham glittering with arms, and the dark-red lines of the English forming in array of battle. Breathless messengers had borne the evil tidings to Montcalm, and far and near his wide-extended camp resounded with the rolling of alarm drums and the din of startled preparation. He, too, had had his struggles and his sorrows. The civil power had thwarted him; famine, discontent, and disaffection were rife among his soldiers; and no small portion of the Canadian militia had dispersed from sheer starvation. In spite of all, he had trusted to hold out till the winter frosts should drive the invaders from before the town; when, on that disastrous morning, the news of their successful temerity fell like a cannon shot upon his ear. Still he assumed a tone of confidence. "They have got to the weak side of us at last," he is reported to have said, "and we must crush them with our numbers." With headlong haste, his troops were pouring over the bridge of the St. Charles, and gathering in heavy masses under the western ramparts of the town. Could numbers give assurance of success, their triumph would have been secure; for five French battalions and the armed colonial peasantry amounted in all to more than seven thousand five hundred men. Full in sight before them stretched the long, thin lines of the British forces,—the half-wild Highlanders, the steady soldiery of England, and the hardy levies of the provinces,—less than five thousand in number, but all inured to battle, and strong in the full assurance of success. Yet, could the chiefs of that gallant army have pierced the secrets of the future, could they have foreseen that the victory which they burned to achieve would have robbed England of her proudest boast, that the conquest of Canada would pave the way for the independence of America, their swords would have dropped from their hands, and the heroic fire have gone out within their hearts.

It was nine o'clock, and the adverse armies stood motionless, each gazing on the other. The clouds hung low,

and, at intervals, warm light showers descended, besprinkling both alike. The coppice and cornfields in front of the British troops were filled with French sharpshooters, who kept up a distant, spattering fire. Here and there a soldier fell in the ranks, and the gap was filled in silence.

At a little before ten, the British could see that Montcalm was preparing to advance, and, in a few moments, all his troops appeared in rapid motion. They came on in three divisions, shouting after the manner of their nation, and firing heavily as soon as they came within range. In the British ranks, not a trigger was pulled, not a soldier stirred; and their ominous composure seemed to damp the spirits of the assailants. It was not till the French were within forty yards that the fatal word was given, and the British muskets blazed forth at once in one crashing explosion. Like a ship at full career, arrested with sudden ruin on a sunken rock, the ranks of Montcalm staggered, shivered, and broke before that wasting storm of lead. The smoke, rolling along the field, for a moment shut out the view; but when the white wreaths were scattered on the wind, a wretched spectacle was disclosed; men and officers tumbled in heaps, battalions resolved into a mob, order and obedience gone; and when the British muskets were leveled for a second volley, the masses of the militia were seen to cower and shrink with uncontrollable panic. For a few minutes, the French regulars stood their ground, returning a sharp and not ineffectual fire. But now, echoing cheer on cheer, redoubling volley on volley, trampling the dying and the dead and driving the fugitives in crowds, the British troops advanced and swept the field before them. The ardor of the men burst all restraint. They broke into a run, and with unsparing slaughter chased the flying multitudes to the gates of Quebec. Foremost of all, the light-footed Highlanders dashed along in furious pursuit, hewing down the Frenchmen with their broadswords, and slaying many in the very ditch of the fortifications. . . .

In the short action and pursuit, the French lost fifteen hundred men, killed, wounded, and taken. Of the remainder, some escaped within the city, and others fled across the St. Charles to rejoin their comrades who had been left to guard the camp. The pursuers were recalled by sound of trumpet; the broken ranks were formed afresh, and the English troops withdrawn beyond reach of the cannon of Quebec. Bougainville, with his corps, arrived from the upper country, and, hovering about their rear, threatened an attack; but when he saw what greeting was prepared for him, he abandoned his purpose and withdrew. Townshend and Murray, the only general officers who remained unhurt, passed to the head of every regiment in turn, and thanked the soldiers for the bravery they had shown; yet the triumph of the victors was mingled with sadness, as the tidings went from rank to rank that Wolfe had fallen.

In the heat of the action, as he advanced at the head of the grenadiers of Louisburg, a bullet shattered his wrist; but he wrapped his handkerchief about the wound, and showed no sign of pain. A moment more, and a ball pierced his side. Still he pressed forward, waving his sword and cheering his soldiers to the attack, when a third shot lodged deep within his breast. He paused, reeled, and, staggering to one side, fell to the earth. Brown, a lieutenant of the grenadiers, Henderson, a volunteer, an officer of artillery, and a private soldier, raised him together in their arms, and, bearing him to the rear, laid him softly on the grass. They asked if he would have a surgeon; but he shook his head, and answered that all was over with him. His eyes closed with the torpor of approaching death, and those around sustained his fainting form. Yet they could not withhold their gaze from the wild turmoil before them, and the charging ranks of their companions rushing through fire and smoke. "See how they run," one of the officers exclaimed, as the French fled in confusion before the leveled bayonets. "Who run?" demanded Wolfe, opening his eyes like a man aroused from sleep. "The enemy,

sir," was the reply; "they give way everywhere." "Then," said the dying general, "tell Colonel Burton to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River, to cut off their retreat from the bridge. Now, God be praised, I will die in peace," he muttered; and, turning on his side, he calmly breathed his last.

Almost at the same moment fell his great adversary, Montcalm, as he strove, with vain bravery, to rally his shattered ranks. Struck down with a mortal wound, he was placed upon a litter and borne to the General Hospital on the banks of the St. Charles. The surgeons told him that he could not recover. "I am glad of it," was his calm reply. He then asked how long he might survive, and was told that he had not many hours remaining. "So much the better," he said; "I am happy that I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec." Officers from the garrison came to his bedside to ask his orders and instructions. "I will give no more orders," replied the defeated soldier; "I have much business that must be attended to, of greater moment than your ruined garrison and this wretched country. My time is very short; therefore, pray leave me." The officers withdrew, and none remained in the chamber but his confessor and the Bishop of Quebec. To the last, he expressed his contempt for his own mutinous and half-famished troops, and his admiration for the disciplined valor of his opponents. He died before midnight, and was buried at his own desire in a cavity of the earth formed by the bursting of a bombshell.

The victorious army encamped before Quebec, and pushed their preparations for the siege with zealous energy; but before a single gun was brought to bear, the white flag was hung out, and the garrison surrendered. On the eighteenth of September, 1759, the rock-built citadel of Canada passed forever from the hands of its ancient masters.

The victory on the Plains of Abraham and the downfall of Quebec filled all England with pride and exultation. From north to south, the land blazed with illumi-

nations, and resounded with the ringing of bells, the firing of guns, and the shouts of the multitude. In one village alone all was dark and silent amid the general joy; for here dwelt the widowed mother of Wolfe. The populace, with unwonted delicacy, respected her lonely sorrow, and forbore to obtrude the sound of their rejoicings upon her grief for one who had been through life her pride and solace, and repaid her love with a tender and constant devotion.

III. PRESCOTT. William Hickling Prescott was the son of a prominent lawyer of Salem who removed to Boston, where his son was educated at Harvard. In his junior year young Prescott met with an accident that destroyed entirely the sight of one eye and injured the other so that he was never able to read or write again without assistance. Like Parkman, his family was in easy circumstances, so he was not compelled to work for his existence, but had that leisure and that comfortable environment so conducive to literary success. His first work was not published till he was forty years old, but it embodied the results of ten years of study and research. He regulated his life by absolute rules, and sacrificed everything to his one great purpose. What an inspiring heritage to Americans is the work of these two great countrymen, Parkman and Prescott—a heritage of courage, of persistence in a worthy ambition and of successful achievement! The biographer of Prescott says he was “tall, well-formed, manly in his bearing but gentle, with light brown hair that was hardly changed or diminished by

years, with a clear complexion, and a ruddy flush on his cheek that kept for him to the last an appearance of comparative youth, but above all with a smile that was the most absolutely contagious I ever looked upon."

Longfellow spoke to him just a few days before his death and describes the interview thus :

I met him in Washington Street just at the foot of Winter Street. He was merry and laughing as usual. At the close of the conversation he said: "I am going to shave off my whiskers, they are growing gray." "Gray hair is becoming," I said. "Becoming!" said he, "what do we care about becoming who must so soon *be going*?" "Then why take the trouble to shave them off?" "That's true!" he replied with a pleasant laugh, and crossed over to Summer Street. So my last remembrance of him is a sunny smile at the corner of a street.

Prescott's style resembles Parkman's more than any other, but he is less discriminating in his choice of facts. Parkman impresses one with the truthfulness of his narratives, while Prescott often leaves his readers wondering whether the brilliancy of the picture is not due to too high coloring. The critics of to-day are rather severe in their treatment of the latter, but he continues to delight many readers. His first history was the *Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*; this was followed by the *Conquest of Mexico*, *Conquest of Peru* and the *History of Philip the Second*, the last a work he did not live to complete.

The vivid description, *The Battle of Otumba*, is from *The Conquest of Mexico*:

As the army was climbing the mountain steeps which shut in the valley of Otompan, the vedettes came in with the intelligence that a powerful body was encamped on the other side, apparently awaiting their approach. The intelligence was soon confirmed by their own eyes, as they turned the crest of the sierra, and saw spread out, below, a mighty host, filling up the whole depth of the valley, and giving to it the appearance, from the white cotton mail of the warriors, of being covered with snow. It consisted of levies from the surrounding country, and especially the populous territory of Tezeuco, drawn together at the instance of Cuitlahua, Montezuma's successor, and now concentrated on this point to dispute the passage of the Spaniards. Every chief of note had taken the field with his whole array gathered under his standard, proudly displaying all the pomp and rude splendor of his military equipment. As far as the eye could reach, were to be seen shields and waving banners, fantastic helmets, forests of shining spears, the bright feather-mail of the chief, and the coarse cotton panoply of his followers, all mingled together in wild confusion, and tossing to and fro like the billows of a troubled ocean. It was a sight to fill the stoutest heart among the Christians with dismay, heightened by the previous expectation of soon reaching the friendly land which was to terminate their wearisome pilgrimage. Even Cortes, as he contrasted the tremendous array before him with his own diminished squadrons, wasted by disease and enfeebled by hunger and fatigue, could not escape the conviction that his last hour had arrived.

But his was not the heart to despond; and he gathered strength from the very extremity of his situation. He had no room for hesitation; for there was no alternative left to him. To escape was impossible. He could not retreat on the capital, from which he had been expelled. He must advance,—cut through the enemy, or perish. He hastily made his dispositions for the fight. He gave his force as broad a front as possible, protecting it on each flank by his little body of horse, now reduced to

twenty. Fortunately, he had not allowed the invalids, for the last two days, to mount behind the riders, from a desire to spare the horses, so that these were now in tolerable condition; and, indeed, the whole army had been refreshed by halting, as we have seen, two nights and a day in the same place, a delay, however, which had allowed the enemy time to assemble in such force to dispute its progress.

Cortes instructed his cavaliers not to part with their lances, and to direct them at the face. The infantry were to thrust, not strike, with their swords; passing them, at once, through the bodies of their enemies. They were, above all, to aim at the leaders, as the general well knew how much depends on the life of the commander in the wars of barbarians, whose want of subordination makes them impatient of any control but that to which they are accustomed.

He then addressed to his troops a few words of encouragement, as customary with him on the eve of an engagement. He reminded them of the victories they had won with odds nearly as discouraging as the present; thus establishing the superiority of science and discipline over numbers. Numbers, indeed, were of no account, where the arm of the Almighty was on their side. And he bade them have full confidence, that He, who had carried them safely through so many perils, would not now abandon them and his own good cause, to perish by the hand of the infidel. His address was brief, for he read in their looks that settled resolve which rendered words unnecessary. The circumstances of their position spoke more forcibly to the heart of every soldier than any eloquence could have done, filling it with that feeling of desperation which makes the weak arm strong, and turns the coward into a hero. After they had earnestly commended themselves, therefore, to the protection of God, the Virgin, and St. James, Cortes led his battalions straight against the enemy.

It was a solemn moment,—that, in which the devoted little band, with steadfast countenances, and their usual

intrepid step, descended on the plain, to be swallowed up, as it were, in the vast ocean of their enemies. The latter rushed on with impetuosity to meet them, making the mountains ring to their discordant yells and battle-cries, and sending forth volleys of stones and arrows which for a moment shut out the light of day. But, when the leading files of the two armies closed, the superiority of the Christians was felt, as their antagonists, falling back before the charges of cavalry, were thrown into confusion by their own numbers who pressed on them from behind. The Spanish infantry followed up the blow, and a wide lane was opened in the ranks of the enemy, who, receding on all sides, seemed willing to allow a free passage for their opponents. But it was to return on them with accumulated force, as rallying they poured upon the Christians, enveloping the little army on all sides, which, with its bristling array of long swords and javelins, stood firm, in the words of a contemporary,—like an islet against which the breakers, roaring and surging, spend their fury in vain. The struggle was desperate of man against man. The Tlascalan seemed to renew his strength, as he fought almost in view of his own native hills; as did the Spaniard, with the horrible doom of the captive before his eyes. Well did the cavaliers do their duty on that day; charging, in little bodies of four and five abreast, deep into the enemy's ranks, riding over the broken files, and by this temporary advantage giving strength and courage to the infantry. Not a lance was there which did not reek with the blood of the infidel. Among the rest, the young captain Sandoval is particularly commemorated for his daring prowess. Managing his fiery steed with easy horsemanship, he darted, when least expected, into the thickest of the *mêlée*, overturning the stanchest warriors, and rejoicing in danger.

But these gallant displays of heroism served only to engulf the Spaniards deeper and deeper in the mass of the enemy, with scarcely any more chance of cutting their way through his dense and interminable battalions, than of hewing a passage with their swords through the

mountains. Many of the Tlascalans and some of the Spaniards had fallen, and not one but had been wounded. Cortes himself had received a second cut on the head, and his horse was so much injured that he was compelled to dismount, and take one from the baggage train, a strong-boned animal, who carried him well through the turmoil of the day. The contest had now lasted several hours. The sun rode high in the heavens, and shed an intolerable fervor over the plain. The Christians, weakened by previous sufferings, and faint with loss of blood, began to relax in their desperate exertions. Their enemies, constantly supported by fresh relays from the rear, were still in good heart, and, quick to perceive their advantage, pressed with redoubled force on the Spaniards. The horse fell back, crowded on the foot; and the latter, in vain seeking a passage amidst the dusky throngs of the enemy, who now closed up the rear, were thrown into some disorder. The tide of battle was setting rapidly against the Christians. The fate of the day would soon be decided; and all that now remained for them seemed to be to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

At this critical moment, Cortes, whose restless eye had been roving round the field in quest of any object that might offer him the means of arresting the coming ruin, rising in his stirrups, descried at a distance, in the midst of the throng, the chief who from his dress and military *cortége* he knew must be the commander of the barbarian forces. He was covered with a rich surcoat of featherwork; and a panache of beautiful plumes, gorgeously set in gold and precious stones, floated above his head. Rising above this, and attached to his back, between the shoulders, was a short staff bearing a golden net for a banner,—the singular, but customary, symbol of authority for an Aztec commander. The cacique, whose name was Cihuaca, was borne on a litter, and a body of young warriors, whose gay and ornamented dresses showed them to be the flower of the Indian nobles, stood round as a guard of his person and the sacred emblem.

The eagle eye of Cortes no sooner fell on this personage, than it lighted up with triumph. Turning quickly round to the cavaliers at his side, among whom were Sandoval, Olid, Alvarado, and Avila, he pointed out the chief, exclaiming, "There is our mark! Follow and support me!" Then crying his war-cry, and striking his iron heel into his weary steed, he plunged headlong into the thickest of the press. His enemies fell back, taken by surprise and daunted by the ferocity of the attack. Those who did not were pierced through with his lance, or borne down by the weight of his charger. The cavaliers followed close in the rear. On they swept, with the fury of a thunderbolt, cleaving the solid ranks asunder, strewing their path with the dying and the dead, and bounding over every obstacle in their way. In a few minutes they were in the presence of the Indian commander, and Cortes, overturning his supporters, sprang forward with the strength of a lion, and, striking him through with his lance, hurled him to the ground. A young cavalier, Juan de Salamanca, who had kept close by his general's side, quickly dismounted and despatched the fallen chief. Then tearing away his banner, he presented it to Cortes, as a trophy to which he had the best claim. It was all the work of a moment. The guard, overpowered by the suddenness of the onset, made little resistance, but, flying, communicated their own panic to their comrades. The tidings of the loss soon spread over the field. The Indians, filled with consternation, now thought only of escape. In their blind terror, their numbers augmented their confusion. They trampled on one another, fancying it was the enemy in their rear.

The Spaniards and Tlascalans were not slow to avail themselves of the marvelous change in their affairs. Their fatigue, their wounds, hunger, thirst, all were forgotten in the eagerness for vengeance; and they followed up the flying foe, dealing death at every stroke, and taking ample retribution for all they had suffered in the bloody marshes of Mexico. Long did they pursue, till, the enemy having abandoned the field, they returned sated with

slaughter to glean the booty which he had left. It was great, for the ground was covered with the bodies of chiefs, at whom the Spaniards, in obedience to the general's instructions, had particularly aimed; and their dresses displayed all the barbaric pomp of ornament, in which the Indian warrior delighted. When his men had thus indemnified themselves, in some degree, for their late reverses, Cortes called them again under their banners; and, after offering up a grateful acknowledgment to the Lord of Hosts for their miraculous preservation, they renewed their march across the now deserted valley. Before the shades of evening had gathered around, they reached an Indian temple on an eminence, which afforded a strong and commodious position for the night.

Such was the famous battle of Otompan,—or Otumba, as commonly called, from the Spanish corruption of the name. It was fought on the eighth of July, 1520. The whole amount of the Indian force is reckoned by Castilian writers at two hundred thousand! that of the slain at twenty thousand! Those who admit the first part of the estimate will find no difficulty in receiving the last. It is about as difficult to form an accurate calculation of the numbers of a disorderly savage multitude, as of the pebbles on the beach, or the scattered leaves in autumn. Yet it was, undoubtedly, one of the most remarkable victories ever achieved in the New World. And this, not merely on account of the disparity of the forces, but of their unequal condition. For the Indians were in all their strength, while the Christians were wasted by disease, famine, and long protracted sufferings; without cannon or fire-arms, and deficient in the military apparatus which had so often struck terror into their barbarian foe,—deficient even in the terrors of a victorious name. But they had discipline on their side, desperate resolve, and implicit confidence in their commander. That they should have triumphed against such odds furnishes an inference of the same kind as that established by the victories of the European over the semi-civilized hordes of Asia.

Yet even here all must not be referred to superior discipline and tactics. For the battle would certainly have been lost, had it not been for the fortunate death of the Indian general. And, although the selection of the victim may be called the result of calculation, yet it was by the most precarious chance that he was thrown in the way of the Spaniards. It is, indeed, one among many examples of the influence of fortune in determining the fate of military operations. The star of Cortes was in the ascendent. Had it been otherwise, not a Spaniard would have survived that day to tell the bloody tale of the battle of Otumba.

IV. MOTLEY. John Lothrop Motley, writing to a friend, has this to say of the way in which he came to write his histories: "I had not first made up my mind to write a history, and then cast about to take up a subject. My subject had taken me up, drawn me on, and absorbed me in itself. It was necessary for me, it seemed, to write the book I had been thinking much of, even if it were destined to fall dead from the press, and I had no inclination or interest to write any other. . . . It was not that I cared about writing a history, but that I felt an inevitable impulse to write *one particular history*."

The one particular history he felt called upon to write was of the Netherlands, which he published as three volumes of *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, four volumes of *The United Netherlands* and two volumes of *John of Barneveld*. Of these books Richardson says:

As interesting as fiction, as eloquent as the best oratory, they are as trustworthy as accuracy and faithful

industry could make them. Motley's portraiture of William the Silent is one of the great delineations of history. Not less able, nor less picturesque, is his remarkable account of the character of Queen Elizabeth of England, and of the court and times in which she lived. Writing of the Netherlands, Motley gives us a military, civil, and social history of Europe in an age of great struggles.

Motley was another Massachusetts man and a Harvard graduate, born in 1814. In youth he was ambitious to excel in poetry and fiction, but none of his verses are preserved and his novels are forgotten. Holmes, alluding to the charge that Motley was in youth haughty and cynical, says this of his personal appearance:

In after years, one who knew Lord Byron most nearly noted his resemblance to that great poet, and spoke of it to one of my friends; but in our young days many pretty youths affected that resemblance and were laughed at for their pains, so that if Motley recalled Byron's portrait it was only because he could not help it. His finely shaped and expressive features; his large, luminous eyes; his dark, waving hair; the singularly spirited set of his head which was most worthy of note for its shapely form and poise; his well-outlined figure—all gave promise of his manly beauty and commended him to those even who could not fully appreciate the richer endowments of which they were only the outward signature.

In Germany, as a student, he formed a warm personal friendship with Prince Bismarck, which continued through life. He passed much of his later life in Europe and had many other notable acquaintances, but his silence, reserve and marked coldness in public did not give him a wide circle of friends. He was recognized as a diplomat by the government, but a disagree-

ment with the administration brought about his recall from England under circumstances that were always painful and irritating to him. He has been charged with favoritism and prejudice, with a strong anti-Catholic leaning. His ardent disposition certainly led him sometimes into very warm regard for people and again into violent disapprobation of them. This spirit finds its way into his history. Prescott writes to him :

You have laid it on Philip rather hard. Indeed you have whittled him down to such an imperceptible point that there is hardly enough of him left to hang a newspaper paragraph on, much less five or six volumes of solid history, as I propose to do. But then you make it up with your hero, William of Orange, and I comfort myself with the reflection that you are looking through a pair of Dutch spectacles, after all.

He possessed, too, a profound reverence for abstract right and a horror for wrong that, when he was viewing the atrocities of the awful struggle between Spain and the Netherlands, may have sometimes blinded him to the real situation. Nevertheless, public interest in his histories is still unabated, the first being the most generally popular.

An excellent impression of his style may be obtained from the following extract from the *History of the United Netherlands*. It may be called *The Destruction of the Spanish Armada* :

The battle lasted six hours long, hot and furious ; for now there was no excuse for retreat on the part of the Spaniards, but on the contrary, it was the intention of

the captain-general to return to his station off Calais, if it were within his power. Nevertheless, the English still partially maintained the tactics which had proved so successful, and resolutely refused the fierce attempts of the Spaniards to lay themselves alongside. Keeping within musket-range, the well-disciplined English mariners poured broadside after broadside against the towering ships of the Armada which afforded so easy a mark; while the Spaniards on their part found it impossible, while wasting incredible quantities of powder and shot, to inflict any severe damage on their enemies. Throughout the action, not an English ship was destroyed, and not a hundred men were killed. On the other hand, all the best ships of the Spaniards were riddled through and through; and with masts and yards shattered, sails and rigging torn to shreds, and a northwest wind still drifting them towards the fatal sandbanks of Holland, they labored heavily in a chopping sea, firing wildly, and receiving tremendous punishment at the hands of Howard, Drake, Seymour, Winter and their followers. Not even master-gunner Thomas could complain that day of "blind exercise" on the part of the English, with "little harm done" to the enemy. There was scarcely a ship in the Armada that did not suffer severely; for nearly all were engaged in that memorable action off the sands of Gravelines. The captain-general himself, Admiral Recalde, Alonzo de Leyva, Oquendo, Diego Flores de Valdez, Bertendona, Don Francisco de Toledo, Don Diego de Pimentel, Telles Enriquez, Alonzo de Luzon, Garibay, with most of the great galleons and galeasses, were in the thickest of the fight; and one after the other each of these huge ships were disabled. Three sank before the fight was over; many others were soon drifting helpless wrecks towards a hostile shore; and before five o'clock in the afternoon, at least sixteen of their best ships had been sacrificed, and from four to five thousand soldiers killed.

Nearly all the largest vessels of the Armada, therefore, having been disabled or damaged,—according to a Span-

ish eye-witness,—and all their small shot exhausted, Medina Sidonia reluctantly gave orders to retreat. The captain-general was a bad sailor; but he was a chivalrous Spaniard of ancient Gothic blood, and he felt deep mortification at the plight of his invincible fleet, together with undisguised resentment against Alexander Farnese, through whose treachery and incapacity he considered the great Catholic cause to have been so foully sacrificed. Crippled, maltreated, and diminished in number as were his ships, he would have still faced the enemy, but the winds and currents were fast driving him on a lee-shore; and the pilots, one and all, assured him that it would be inevitable destruction to remain. After a slight and very ineffectual attempt to rescue Don Diego de Pimentel in the St. Matthew—who refused to leave his disabled ship—and Don Francisco de Toledo, whose great galleon the St. Philip was fast driving, a helpless wreck, towards Zeeland, the Armada bore away N.N.E. into the open sea, leaving those who could not follow, to their fate. . . .

But Howard decided to wrestle no further pull. Having followed the Spaniards till Friday, 12th of August, as far as the latitude of $56^{\circ} 17'$, the Lord Admiral called a council. It was then decided, in order to save English lives and ships, to put into the Frith of Forth for water and provisions, leaving two “pinnaces to dog the fleet until it should be past the Isles of Scotland.” But the next day, as the wind shifted to the northwest, another council decided to take advantage of the change, and bear away for the North Foreland, in order to obtain a supply of powder, shot, and provisions.

Up to this period the weather, though occasionally threatening, had been moderate. During the week which succeeded the eventful night off Calais, neither the Armada nor the English ships had been much impeded in their manoeuvres by storms or heavy seas. But on the following Sunday, 14th of August, there was a change. The wind shifted again to the southwest; and during the whole of that day and the Monday, blew a tremendous gale. “ ’Twas a more violent storm,” said Howard,

“than was ever seen before at this time of the year.” The retreating English fleet was scattered, many ships were in peril “among the ill-favored sands off Norfolk,” but within four or five days all arrived safely in Margate roads.

Far different was the fate of the Spaniards. Over their Invincible Armada, last seen by the departing English midway between the coasts of Scotland and Denmark, the blackness of night seemed suddenly to descend. A mystery hung for a long time over their fate. Damaged, leaking, without pilots, without a competent commander, the great fleet entered that furious storm, and was whirled along the iron crags of Norway, and between the savage rocks of Faroe and the Hebrides. In those regions of tempest the insulted North wreaked its full vengeance on the insolent Spaniards. Disaster after disaster marked their perilous track, gale after gale swept them hither and thither, tossing them on sandbanks or shattering them against granite cliffs. The coasts of Norway, Scotland, Ireland, were strewn with the wrecks of that pompous fleet which claimed the dominion of the seas; with the bones of those invincible legions which were to have sacked London and made England a Spanish viceroyalty.

Through the remainder of the month of August there was a succession of storms. On the 2d of September a fierce south-wester drove Admiral Oquendo in his galleon, together with one of the great galeasses, two large Venetian ships (the *Ratta* and the *Balauzara*), and thirty-six other vessels, upon the Irish coast, where nearly every soul on board perished; while the few who escaped to the shore—notwithstanding their religious affinity with the inhabitants—were either butchered in cold blood, or sent coupled in halters from village to village, in order to be shipped to England. A few ships were driven on the English coast; others went ashore near Rochelle.

Of the four galeasses and four galleys, one of each returned to Spain. Of the ninety-one great galleons and hulks, fifty-eight were lost and thirty-three returned. Of

the tenders and zabras, seventeen were lost and eighteen returned. Of one hundred and thirty-four vessels which sailed from Coruna in July, but fifty-three, great and small, made their escape to Spain; and these were so damaged as to be utterly worthless. The Invincible Armada had not only been vanquished but annihilated.

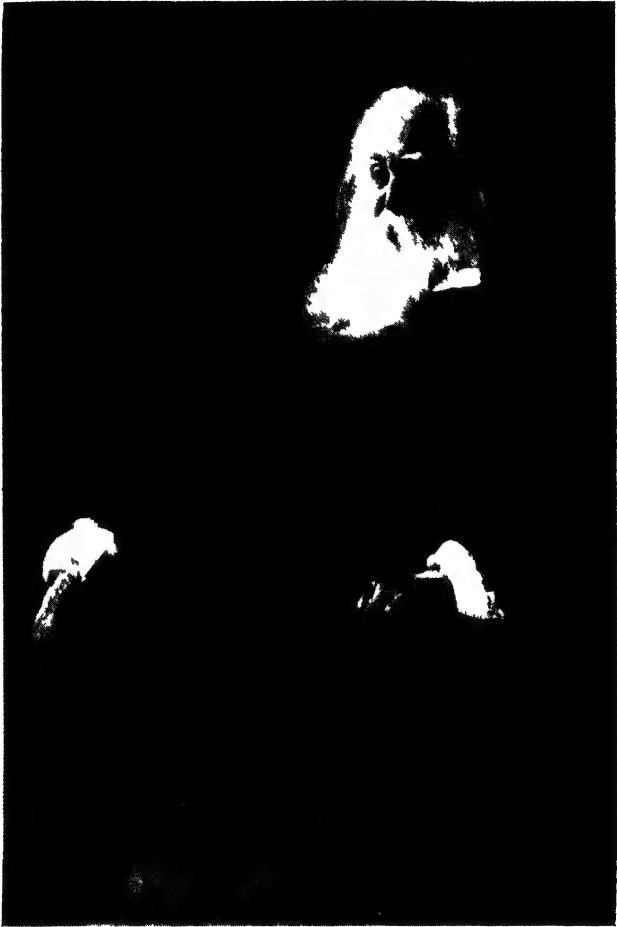
Of the thirty thousand men who sailed in the fleet, it is probable that not more than ten thousand ever saw their native land again. Most of the leaders of the expedition lost their lives. Medina Sidonia reached Santander in October, and as Philip for a moment believed, "with the greater part of the Armada," although the King soon discovered his mistake. Recalde, Diego Flores de Valdez, Oquendo, Maldonado, Bobadilla, Manriquez, either perished at sea, or died of exhaustion immediately after their return. Pedro de Valdez, Vasco de Silva, Alonzo de Sayas, Pimentel, Toledo, with many other nobles, were prisoners in England and Holland. There was hardly a distinguished family in Spain not placed in mourning; so that, to relieve the universal gloom, an edict was published forbidding the wearing of mourning at all. On the other hand, a merchant of Lisbon, not yet reconciled to the Spanish conquest of his country, permitted himself some tokens of hilarity at the defeat of the Armada, and was immediately hanged by express command of Philip. Thus—as men said—one could neither cry nor laugh within the Spanish dominions.

This was the result of the invasion, so many years preparing, and at an expense almost incalculable. In the year 1588 alone, the cost of Philip's armaments for the subjugation of England could not have been less than six millions of ducats; and there was at least as large a sum on board the Armada itself, although the Pope refused to pay his promised million. And with all this outlay, and with the sacrifice of so many thousand lives, nothing had been accomplished; and Spain, in a moment, instead of seeming terrible to all the world, had become ridiculous.

V. WALT WHITMAN. With the group of literary historians, we reach the end of the predominance of Boston as a literary center, and find New York beginning to take its place. Before closing this work, which has already reached the period at which we have determined it shall end, it seems necessary to pause a moment and consider one of the most discussed of our writers, one upon whose worth and rank neither critics nor other readers seem able to agree.

Walter Whitman (1819-1892), better known as Walt Whitman, or, as an admiring friend called him in his maturity, "the good gray poet," was the son of a Long Island carpenter, who was able to give his boy few opportunities, though the child could roam about in the beautiful scenery of Long Island and, subsequently, obtain in Brooklyn and New York, to the former of which cities his father had removed, a common-school education. But from the age of thirteen, when he entered a printer's office, he had no schooling, and thus his works give evidence of lack of culture, though not altogether of lack of study. It was a curious, wandering, unsettled life that Whitman led, and his associates were drawn from the laboring classes or even from lower, not to say disreputable, grades of society, whose company he frequented and whose habits and modes of thought he studied pertinaciously.

Sometimes working as a carpenter, at other times as a printer, editing papers that did not



*From Painting by John W. Alexander
Metropolitan Museum of Art New York*

WALT WHITMAN
1819-1892

succeed, or holding for a limited time more responsible positions, Whitman always remained himself, self-conscious, healthy, energetic, but an everlasting foe to conventionalism of all kinds. The most distinguished period of service to humanity may be considered that in which after the death of his brother in the Civil War he acted as a nurse in hospitals and on the battlefield. Returning thereafter to Washington, he was given a clerkship in the Department of the Interior, but the Secretary, then Mr. James Harlan, having, after office hours, discovered a copy of *Leaves of Grass* in Whitman's desk, he was so shocked by what he considered the obscenity or decadence of some of the poems that he removed the employee as unfit for public service. However, the Attorney General, Mr. James Speed, took another view of the case and gave the poet a position in his department. Whitman never married; in 1873 he suffered from an attack of paralysis, and after the death of his mother, with whom he had lived, he moved to Camden, New Jersey, reduced almost to penury and facing a permanent invalidism. However, his health improved, and he continued his literary labors almost to the time of his death.

Whitman made his first appearance in poetry when he published a thin little volume, *Leaves of Grass*, referred to above, which met with such a storm of abuse and criticism that it was a failure financially and gave little encouragement to the author. However, from

time to time new editions of the original poems, coupled with additional ones, continued to appear under the original title, which eventually came to include all his poetical works. The frankness with which Whitman treated subjects which are not usually discussed in print, his roughness, not to say brutality, of thought, his sympathy with mankind in the rough, and his astonishing disregard for the rules of poesy make his readers comparatively few in number, and easily divisible into two classes. In one group might be placed those who from a prurient curiosity read his more objectionable poems and find in them what they seek, and in another many of good judgment and fine taste, who find in his writings true poetry and high ideals.

Whitman's sympathies were with the multitude, and he wrote for the common people, but in a language and a manner which the populace could not understand or do not appreciate, so that his disciples, of whom indeed he has many, come rather from the cultivated classes; in England he obtained an even greater popularity than in America. To the new reader, Whitman is depressing, exasperating or admirable according to the poems which are first read or to the spirit given to them. Some one has remarked that the beginner should read *Leaves of Grass* backward, and certainly it would need the support of such poems as *A Clear Midnight*, *On the Beach at Night*, *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* and his sea

poems generally to enable one to sift out of the great mass of chaff the grains of wheat. Any poetic extracts from Whitman would be almost certain to convey a wrong impression, and there is little use in trying to understand the man or his works unless one approaches him in an unprejudiced spirit of inquiry and is willing to spend the time and thought necessary to dig out the message he has for humanity. To say, however, that he is not a great poet is anticipating the verdict of the future in a manner for which we have no justification. On the other hand, to condemn him as decadent and without merit is far more unreasonable.

Whitman's prose, however, does not conform to his poetry, for at times, when deeply moved, he wrote with a rhythmical swing and a beauty of idea that gives him high rank among modern prose writers. His *Democratic Vistas*, *Memoranda during the War*, and more especially his *Specimen Days and Collect*, contain his principal prose works, and all are not only decidedly readable but show his theory of life as fully as his less understood poems. The following passage, which we may call *Unnamed Remains the Bravest Soldier*, is from *Specimen Days and Collect*, and it gives us an eloquent appreciation of the fate of the rank and file in war:

Of scenes like these, I say, who writes—whoe'er can write the story? Of many a score—aye, thousands, north and south, of unwrit heroes, unknown heroisms, incredible, impromptu, first-class desperations—who tells?

No history ever—no poem sings, no music sounds, those bravest men of all—those deeds. No formal general's report, nor book in the library, nor column in the paper, embalms the bravest, north or south, east or west. Unnamed, unknown, remain, and still remain, the bravest soldiers. Our manliest—our boys—our hardy darlings; no picture gives them. Likely, the typic one of them (standing, no doubt, for hundreds, thousands), crawls aside to some bush-clump, or ferny tuft, on receiving his death-shot—there sheltering a little while, soaking roots, grass and soil, with red blood—the battle advances, retreats, flits from the scene, sweeps by—and there, haply with pain and suffering (yet less, far less, than is supposed), the last lethargy winds like a serpent round him—the eyes glaze in death—none recks—perhaps the burial-squads, in truce, a week afterwards, search not the secluded spot—and there, at last, the Bravest Soldier crumbles in mother earth, unburied and unknown.

From the same source we take Whitman's tribute to *The Silent General*:

Sept. 28, '79.—So General Grant, after circumambiating the world, has arrived home again—landed in San Francisco yesterday, from the ship City of Tokio from Japan. What a man he is! what a history! what an illustration—his life—of the capacities of that American individuality common to us all. Cynical critics are wondering "what the people can see in Grant" to make such a hubbub about. They aver (and it is no doubt true) that he has hardly the average of our day's literary and scholastic culture, and absolutely no pronounc'd genius or conventional eminence of any sort. Correct: but he proves how an average Western farmer, mechanic, boatman, carried by tides of circumstances, perhaps caprices, into a position of incredible military or civic responsibilities (history has presented none more trying, no born monarch's, no mark more shining for attack or envy), may steer his way fitly and steadily through them all, carrying the country and himself with credit year after

year—command over a million armed men—fight more than fifty heavy battles—rule for eight years a land larger than all the kingdoms of Europe combined—and then, retiring, quietly (with a cigar in his mouth) make the promenade of the whole world, through its courts and coteries, and kings and czars and mikados, and splendidest glitters and etiquettes, as phlegmatically as he ever walk'd the portico of a Missouri hotel after dinner. I say all this is what people like—and I am sure I like it. Seems to me it transcends Plutarch. How these old Greeks, indeed, would have seized on him! A mere plain man—no art, no poetry—only practical sense, ability to do, or try his best to do, what devolv'd upon him. A common trader, money-maker, tanner, farmer of Illinois—general for the republic, in its terrific struggle with itself, in the war of attempted secession—President following (a task of peace, more difficult than the war itself)—nothing heroic, as the authorities put it—and yet the greatest hero. The gods, the destinies, seem to have concentrated upon him.

VI. CONCLUSION. We have reached the point where the literature of all nations has come to partake of the same general characteristics. In America its canons are as definitely settled as elsewhere, and when we have omitted mention of such writers as R. H. Stoddard, Bayard Taylor, E. C. Stedman, Mark Twain, W. D. Howells, Henry James, Eugene Field, James Whitcomb Riley and the many others whose works have their measure of popularity and whose names bid fair to become a permanent addition to the glory of the land, it is not done from a sense of their unfitness, but from the impossibility of giving them the space they deserve without doing violence to our general plan. As we have elsewhere indicated, to pre-

dict the future seems utterly impossible, for while we have traced the literature of all important nations from its beginnings to the time when it harmonizes with the universal traits of all good composition, we have gained no principles which enable us to foresee any change in the great rules which govern the production of good literature. From some nation yet unknown to literary fame may come a force that shall revolutionize the art, but there is nothing in the history of the past to indicate such a possibility. The effects of the great World War upon literature will be vital and lasting, but no man can foresee their character or even suggest what they may be. There is enough, however, in this great collection from the writings of men of all nations and all ages to give any one an adequate conception of the literature of power and to show him how completely every phase of human life is utilized by those writers who have gained eminence. Every modern literature lacks something of originality, but in the several countries where it is produced it certainly embodies the finest conception of the greatest men of all ages. The increasing efficiency in our modes of communication, the lightning-like rapidity with which thoughts fly around the world, the rapid exchange of knowledge and thought seem to indicate an increasing unity rather than a more expansive originality, an idea greatly strengthened by the participation of the United States in European affairs.



CHAPTER XXXV

CHRONOLOGY

THE multiplicity of writers of English literature may make this table seem long and confusing, yet it is desirable to include at least as many authors as are treated even briefly in this work. American writers are placed in their chronological position with the English; their names are indicated by the use of asterisks.

55 B. C.—England first invaded by the Romans.

Third Century A. D.—Reputed lyrics of Ossian.

449—Hengist and Horsa (probably) invaded England.

Fifth Century—Roman legions withdrawn from England.

- Fifth Century—*Chronicles*, in Celtic.
680—Death of Caedmon.
Eighth Century (about)—Cynewulf.
735—Death of the Venerable Bede.
750 (or before)—Composition of *Beowulf*.
Ninth Century (or before)—Bardic songs and legends in Celtic.
827—Egbert, king of a united England.
849–901—ALFRED THE GREAT.
893–897—Best parts of *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* written.
1000 (about)—Leif Ericksen visited America.
1013—Danes under Sweyn at height of power in England.
1066—William of Normandy crowned King of England.
Eleventh Century (end of)—The *Ormulum*.
Twelfth Century (beginning of)—Layamon's *Brut*.
1100 (about)–1154—Geoffrey of Monmouth.
Twelfth Century (early part)—Origin of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.
Twelfth Century (early part)—First Miracle Play produced in England.
1154—Henry II (Plantagenet or Angevin) made King.
1189–1199—Reign of Richard Coeur de Lion.
1215—*Magna Charta* signed by King John.
1272–1307—Edward I; Scotland subjugated.
1307–1327—Reign of Edward II; Scotland won its independence.

- 1324 (about)–1384—John Wyclif.
1325 (about)–1408—John Gower.
1327–1377—Edward III; beginning of Hundred Years' War.
1322 (about)–1400 (about)—William Langland; *Vision of Piers Plowman*.
1337—Battle of Crecy.
1340 (about)–1400—GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
1341—House of Commons separated from the House of Lords.
1348—The Great Plague.
1350 (about)—English the prescribed language.
1352—Battle of Poitiers.
1415—Battle of Agincourt.
1422 (about)–1491—William Caxton.
1431—Joan of Arc burned at the stake.
1450–1485—Wars of the Roses (York and Plantagenet).
1460 (about)–1529—John Skelton.
1470 (about)—Sir Thomas Malory completed his translation of the Arthurian legends.
1474—*The Game and Playe of Chesse* (first book printed in England).
1478–1535—Sir Thomas More.
1485—Battle of Bosworth Field; death of Richard III.
1485–1509—Reign of Henry VII (Tudor); Scotland and Ireland united with England.
1492—Columbus's voyage and discovery of America.

1495 (about)—Wynkyn de Worde printed
A Little Geste of Robin Hood.

1497 (about)—1580 (about)—John Heywood.

1497—John Cabot explored the coast of Labrador.

1503 (about)—1542—Sir Thomas Wyatt.

1505–1556—Nicholas Udall.

1509–1547—Reign of Henry VIII.

1509—Erasmus and Colet at Oxford.

1515–1568—Sir Roger Ascham.

1517 (about)—1547—Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.

1518—Wolsey appointed Cardinal.

1536—Death of William Tyndale.

Sixteenth Century—Old English ballads
first in print.

1551—More's *Utopia* published in England.

1552–1618—Sir Walter Raleigh.

1552 (probably)—1599—EDMUND SPENSER.

1554–1586—Sir Philip Sidney.

1554–1601—Richard Hooker.

1558–1603—Reign of Queen Elizabeth.

1558 (about)—1597 (about)—George Peele.

1560 (about)—1592—Robert Greene.

1561–1626—SIR FRANCIS BACON.

1563–1593—Christopher Marlowe.

1563–1637—Ben Jonson.

1564–1616—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

1565—St. Augustine founded.

1568–1639—Sir Henry Wotton.

1573–1631—John Donne.

1576 or 1577—First theater built in London.

- 1577-1640—Robert Burton.
1579—John Lyly published *Euphues*.
1579-1625—John Fletcher.
1584-1616—Francis Beaumont.
1587—Mary Queen of Scots beheaded.
1588—Defeat of Spanish Armada.
1588-1667—George Wither.
1591-1674—Robert Herrick.
1593-1633—George Herbert.
1593-1683—Izaak Walton.
1598 (about)-1638 (about)—Thomas Carew.
1603-1625—Reign of James I (James VI of Scotland).
1605-1682—Sir Thomas Browne.
1605—Plot of Guy Fawkes.
1606-1687—Edmund Waller.
1606—London and Plymouth Companies chartered.
1607—Jamestown founded.
1608-1674—JOHN MILTON.
1609-1642—Sir John Suckling.
1612-1680—Samuel Butler.
1613-1667—Jeremy Taylor.
1614—New Netherlands founded by the Dutch.
1615-1691—Richard Baxter.
1618-1658—Richard Lovelace.
1620-1706—John Evelyn.
1620—Puritans settled Plymouth.
1622—The *Weekly News* first published.
1623-1704—John Locke.
1628-1688—JOHN BUNYAN.

- 1631-1700—John Dryden.
1633-1703—Samuel Pepys.
1634—Maryland founded by Lord Baltimore.
1636—Harvard College founded.
1638-1706—Thomas Sackville.
1639-1723—Increase Mather.*
1642-1727—Sir Isaac Newton.
1649—Charles I beheaded.
1655—Oliver Cromwell installed as Lord Protector.
1660—Charles II proclaimed King.
1661-1731—DANIEL DEFOE.
1663-1728—Cotton Mather.*
1664—English took New Netherlands.
1667-1745—JONATHAN SWIFT.
1672-1729—Sir Richard Steele.
1672-1719—JOSEPH ADDISON.
1683-1765—Edward Young.
1688-1744—ALEXANDER POPE.
1689—William of Orange became King.
1689-1763—French and English Wars in America.
1689-1761—Samuel Richardson.
1692-1754—Joseph Butler.
1694-1773—Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield.
1700-1748—James Thomson.
1702-1714—Reign of Queen Anne.
1703-1758—Jonathan Edwards.*
1705—Discovery of the tenth century manuscript of *Beowulf*.
1706-1790—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.*

- 1707—England and Scotland became one.
1707-1754—Henry Fielding.
1709—First numbers of *The Tatler* published.
1709-1784—SAMUEL JOHNSON.
1711-1776—David Hume.
1713-1768—Laurence Sterne.
1714-1727—Reign of George I.
1714-1763—William Shenstone.
1716-1771—Thomas Gray.
1720-1793—Gilbert White.
1721-1793—William Robertson.
1721-1759—William Collins.
1721-1771—Tobias George Smollett.
1728-1774—OLIVER GOLDSMITH.
1729-1811—Thomas Percy.
1729-1797—EDMUND BURKE.
1731-1800—William Cowper.
1736-1796—James MacPherson.
1737-1794—Edward Gibbon.
1740-1795—James Boswell.
1751-1816—Richard Brinsley Sheridan.
1752-1770—Thomas Chatterton.
1752-1840—Frances Burney (Madame D'Arblay).
1754-1832—George Crabbe.
1757-1827—William Blake.
1759-1796—ROBERT BURNS.
1760-1829—Reign of George III.
1764-1823—Anne Ward (Mrs. Radcliffe).
1767-1848—Maria Edgeworth.
1769-1772—*Letters of Junius* appeared.
1769-1853—Mrs. Amelia Opie.

- 1770—Boston Massacre.
1770-1835—James Hogg (The Ettrick Shepherd).
1770-1850—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.
1771-1832—SIR WALTER SCOTT.
1772-1834—Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
1774—First Continental Congress met.
1774-1843—Robert Southey.
1775—First blood of the Revolution shed at Lexington.
1775-1817—JANE AUSTEN.
1775-1834—CHARLES LAMB.
1775-1864—Walter Savage Landor.
1776—Declaration of Independence.
1777-1844—Thomas Campbell.
1778-1830—William Hazlitt.
1779-1852—Thomas Moore.
1780-1842—William Ellery Channing.*
1783-1859—WASHINGTON IRVING.*
1784-1859—James Henry (Leigh) Hunt.
1785-1859—Thomas De Quincey.
1787—Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia.
1787-1874—Bryan Waller Proctor (Barry Cornwall).
1788-1824—George Gordon, Lord Byron.
1789—George Washington elected President of the United States.
1789-1851—JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.*
1792-1822—Percy Bysshe Shelley.
1792-1848—Frederick Marryat.
1794-1878—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.*
1795-1821—John Keats.

- 1795-1881—THOMAS CARLYLE.
1796-1859—WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT.*
1797-1868—Samuel Lover.
1800-1859—THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.
1800-1891—GEORGE BANCROFT.*
1803-1873—Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton.
1803-1881—George Borrow.
1803-1882—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.*
1804-1864—NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.*
1804-1881—Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield.
1805—Lord Nelson killed at Trafalgar.
1805-1882—Harrison Ainsworth.
1806-1861—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.
1806-1872—Charles James Lever.
1807-1882—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.*
1807-1892—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.*
1809-1861—Arthur Hugh Clough.
1809-1882—Edward Fitzgerald.
1809-1882—Charles Robert Darwin.
1809-1892—ALFRED LORD TENNYSON.
1809-1894—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.*
1810-1850—Margaret Fuller (Ossoli).*
1810-1860—Theodore Parker.*
1811-1849—EDGAR ALLAN POE.*
1811-1863—WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.
1811-1865—Elizabeth Stevenson (Mrs. Gaskell).
1811-1874—Charles Sumner.*
1811-1884—Wendell Phillips.*
1811-1896—HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.*

- 1812-1815—War with England.
1812-1870—CHARLES DICKENS.
1812-1889—ROBERT BROWNING.
1814-1877—JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.*
1814-1884—Charles Reade.
1815-1882—Anthony Trollope.
1816-1855—Charlotte Brontë (Currer Bell).
1817-1862—HENRY DAVID THOREAU.*
1818-1848—Emily Brontë.
1818-1894—James Anthony Froude.
1819-1875—Charles Kingsley.
1819-1880—MARY ANN EVANS (GEORGE
ELIOT).
1819-1891—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.*
1819-1892—WALTER (WALT) WHITMAN.*
1819-1900—JOHN RUSKIN.
1820-1893—Herbert Spencer.
1820-1904—Sir Edwin Arnold.
1822-1882—DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.
1822-1888—MATTHEW ARNOLD.
1823-1892—Edward A. Freeman.
1824-1889—William Wilkie Collins.
1825-1896—Thomas Huxley.
1826-1887—Dinah Maria Mulock (Mrs.
Craik).
1830-1884—Christina Georgina Rossetti.
1831-1891—Edward Bulwer-Lytton (Owen
Meredith).
1834-1896—William Morris.
1837-1883—John Richard Green.
1837-1901—Reign of Queen Victoria.
1837-1909—Algernon Charles Swinburne.
1838-1903—W. E. H. Lecky.

1839-1894—Walter Horatio Pater.

1844-1912—Andrew Lang.

1850-1894—ROBERT LOUIS (Robert Lewis Balfour) STEVENSON.

1861-1865—The Rebellion.

1910—George V became King.

1914-1918—World War.

1917—United States entered the World War.

COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

The following table is inserted merely to enable the reader to obtain at a glance an idea of the antiquity of the literatures and the approximate dates at which a few of the leading writers flourished. For this purpose it is not necessary that the dates should be exact in years; in fact, the authors are placed at the period when each might be expected to be in the full possession of his powers. For greater accuracy the reader is referred to the text or to the chronological summaries which follow the text of each country.

4000 B. C.—*Precepts of Kegemni*, earliest literary remains of Egypt.

4000 B. C.—200 B. C.—Period of Cuneiform Inscriptions, Syria.

3500 B. C.—*Precepts of Ptah Hotep*, Egypt.

2800 B. C.—Fragments of the *Book of the Dead*, Egypt.

2760 B. C.—The *Instructions of Amenemhat*, Egypt.

- 2357 B. C.—Chinese historical period begins.
2250 B. C.—*Hammurabi's Code*, Syria.
2000 B. C.—Pelasgians in Greece; ZOROASTER (doubtful), Persia.
Fifteenth Century B. C.—Origin of the *Vedas*, India.
1400 B. C.—Hellen lived, Greece; earliest clay tablets known, Hebrews.
1250 B. C.—*Bene Israel* formed.
960 B. C.—Solomon, Hebrews.
900 B. C.—LAKMAN, Persia; HOMER, Greece; HESIOD, Greece.
753 B. C.—Rome founded.
663 B. C.—*Book of the Dead* put in canonical form, Egypt.
620 B. C.—PRINCE GAUTAMA born, India.
604 B. C.—LAO TSE born, China.
551 B. C.—CONFUCIUS born, China.
525 B. C.—Egypt conquered by Cambyses.
500 B. C.—AESCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, HERODOTUS, Greece.
460 B. C.—EURIPIDES, Greece.
430 B. C.—SOCRATES, Greece.
410 B. C.—ARISTOPHANES, Greece.
400 B. C.—PLATO, Greece; origin of the *Jatakas*, India.
372 B. C.—MENCIUS born, China.
350 B. C.—DEMOSTHENES, Greece; Berosus; Babylonian account of the Deluge.
300 B. C.—*Book of Thoth*, Egypt.
206 B. C.—Roman conquest of Spain.
206 B. C.—BIDPAI, Persia; *Code of Manu*, India.

- 194 B. C.—CATO, Rome.
150 B. C.—TERENCE, Rome.
145 B. C.—SSU MA CHIEN (Father of History) born, China.
100 B. C.—*The Clay Cart*, first drama of India.
66 B. C.—CICERO, Rome.
55 B. C.—England invaded by Romans; JULIUS CAESAR.
51 B. C.—Caesar conquered Gaul.
46 B. C.—SALLUST, Rome.
32 B. C.—The LADY PAM, China.
30 B. C.—VERGIL, Rome.
25 B. C.—HORACE, Rome.
8 B. C.—LIVY, Rome.
3 B. C.—OVID, Rome.
1 A. D.—PLUTARCH, Greece. Valmiki said to have written the *Ramayana*, India.
75—JOSEPHUS, Greece.
80—QUINTILIAN, Rome.
90—EPICTETUS, Rome.
100—Juvenal, Rome.
165—MARCUS AURELIUS, Rome.
196—"The Seven Scholars," China.
200—"The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove," China.
Third Century—Reputed lyrics of Ossian, England.
381—*Codex Argenteus*, Germany.
Fifth Century—Roman legions withdrawn; *Chronicles* in Celtic, England; compilation of the *Talmud*, Hebrews; KALIDASA, India.

- 486—Clovis defeated the Romans, France.
520—BOETHIUS, Rome.
570—Birth of Mohammed, Arabia.
Sixth Century—SUBANDHU, India.
660—JIMMU TENNO, founder of Japanese Empire.
Sixth and Seventh Centuries—*Shinto Rituals*, Japan.
Seventh Century—BANA, India.
641—Alexandrian Library burned.
680—Death of Caedmon, England.
712—*History of Old Affairs* completed, Japan.
737—Charles Martel defeated the Saracens, France.
745—HAN YU, China.
750—Scandinavian irruptions into Central Europe; composition of *Beowulf*, England.
800—Fragments of *Hildebrandslied*, Germany; *Ragnar's Drapa*, Scandinavia.
809—Death of Haroun Al Raschid, Arabia.
842—*Strasburg Oaths*, oldest French literary remains.
862—Rurik founded Russia.
870—Ingulf settled Iceland.
880—ALFRED THE GREAT, England.
910—Kingdom of Leon established in Spain.
980—AVICENNA, Arabia.
997—Saint Stephen, first king of Hungary.
1000—Leif Ericksen visited America.

- 1020—FERDUSI died, Persia.
1026—THE CID born, Spain.
1094—*Gengi Monogatari*, Japan.
1096—First Crusade begun.
Twelfth Century—*Story of the Band of Igor*, Russia.
1132—OMAR KHAYYAM died, Persia.
1141—Alphonso I, King of Portugal.
1149—AVERRHUES, Arabia.
1150—*Chanson de Roland*, France.
1195—*Nibelungenlied* composed, Germany.
1200—NIZAMI, Persia.
1215—*Magna Charta* signed, England.
1230—Death of Vogelweide, Germany.
1235—*Younger Edda*, Scandinavia.
1248—Building of the Alhambra begun, Spain.
1270—*Roman de la Rose*, France.
1300—Novel and drama appeared in China;
Roman de Renard, France; DANTE, Italy.
1340—PETRARCH and BOCCACCIO, Italy;
CHICKAMATSU, Japan.
1360—CHAUCER, England.
1377—Froissart, France.
1425—HUNYADI, Hungary.
1450—MOTOKIYO, Japan.
1461—*Der Edelstein*, first book printed in Germany.
1480—Lorenzo de' Medici, Italy.
1492—Columbus discovered America.
1500—MACHIAVELLI and ARIOSTO, Italy.
1520—LUTHER, Germany.

- 1525—VICENTE, Portugal; LAS CASAS, Spain.
1530—RABELAIS, France.
1543—MENDOZA, Spain.
1545—CAMOENS, Portugal.
1550—MICHELANGELO and CELLINI, Italy.
1569—Ponce de Leon, Spain.
1573—MONTAIGNE, France.
1578—LI SHIH CHEN and his *Materia Medica*, China.
1587—CERVANTES, Spain; *Doctor Faust* appeared in Germany.
1590—SPENSER, England.
1600—Galileo, Italy; SHAKESPEARE, England; LOPE DE VEGA, Spain.
1609—Douay version of the Old Testament completed.
1611—The King James Version completed.
1640—CALDERON, Spain.
1643—The *Older Edda* discovered, Scandinavia.
1646—CORNEILLE, France.
1650—MILTON, England.
1662—PU SUNG-LING, China.
1670—YEKKEN, Japan.
1679—RACINE, France.
1693—CHICKAMATSU, Japan.
1700—Peter the Great, Russia; SWIFT, England.
1730—Voltaire, France.
1740—METASTASIO, Italy.
1742—ROUSSEAU, France.
1750—FRANKLIN, United States; JOHNSON, England.

- 1764—KLOPSTOCK, LESSING and KANT, Germany.
- 1770—MOTOORI, Japan.
- 1789—ALFIERI, Italy.
- 1790—BURNS, England.
- 1815—Napoleon banished.
- 1820—GOETHE and SCHILLER, Germany; WORDSWORTH and SCOTT, England; IRVING, United States; OEHLenschLAGER, Denmark.
- 1825—TEGNER, Sweden; KISFALUDY, Hungary.
- 1830—COOPER, United States.
- 1840—BALZAC and HUGO, France; BRYANT, EMERSON and HAWTHORNE, United States; CARLYLE, MACAULAY and E. B. BROWNING, England; VOROSMARTY, Hungary; Heine, Germany; PUSHKIN, Russia.
- 1843—DUMAS, France.
- 1845—ANDERSEN, Denmark; MANZONI and MAZZINI, Italy.
- 1850—GOGOL, Russia; WHITTIER, LONGFELLOW, HOLMES and POE, United States; TENNYSON and THACKERAY, England.
- 1860—TURGENIEFF, DOSTOIEVSKY and OSTROSKY, Russia; WAGNER, Germany; LOWELL, United States.
- 1865—JOKAI, Hungary; IBSEN and BJORN-SON, Norway.

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